REPORTS ▫ 19

LOCAL GOVERNMENT REFORM IN WINNIPEG, 1945 - 1977: A SYMPATHETIC VIEW

George Rich

INSTITUTE OF URBAN STUDIES

UNIVERSITY OF WINNIPEG

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Report No. 19

by

George Rich

Institute of Urban Studies
1987

PUBLICATION DATA

Rich, George
Local government reform in Winnipeg, 1945-1977

(Report; 19)

ISBN: 0-920213-45-6

I. University of Winnipeg. Institute of Urban Studies. II. Title. III. Series: Reports (University of Winnipeg, Institute of Urban Studies); 19.

This publication was partially supported by the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation but the views expressed are the personal views of the author and the Corporation accepts no responsibility for them.

Published by:

INSTITUTE OF URBAN STUDIES
University of Winnipeg
515 Portage Avenue
Winnipeg, Manitoba
R3B 2E9 CANADA
Tel: (204) 786-9409

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ISBN: 0-920213-45-6

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1. INTRODUCTION

For those interested in local government, Winnipeg is unique among the metropolitan areas in Canada as it has undergone two major and distinctly different reforms; Metro Winnipeg in 1960, and Unicity Winnipeg in 1971. As will be described in the detailed discussion that follows, the story of reform begins immediately following World War II, a period of change and uncertainty when it was realised that the full employment and economic well-being occasioned by the war would come to an end, and a return to the conditions of unemployment experienced in the 1930s could, and probably would, return. In response to this concern the provincial government, in particular, began to consider ways and means for stimulating the economy. It was in these considerations that the idea of local government reform had its genesis.

In 1946 the metropolitan area had a population of 320,484 of which 229,045, or 82 per cent, lived in the City of Winnipeg. In addition to the City of Winnipeg, the City of St. Boniface and the municipalities of St. James, St. Vital, Tuxedo, Transcona, Fort Garry and East and West Kildonan had urban areas, while the outer ring of municipalities showed evidence of urban sprawl and ribbon development along the principal highways. The need for inter-municipal co-operation had already been acknowledged by the creation of the Greater Winnipeg Water and Sanitary Districts to provide the urban municipalities with a bulk water supply and the treatment of sanitary sewage. As the metropolitan area accommodated 44 per cent of the provincial population, and was expected to maintain and probably increase its share of the provincial population, and as it already had the characteristics of a metropolis - an urban area fragmented into a number of municipal jurisdictions - it was apparent that some mechanism would have to be found to deal with the expansion of services into the suburbs.

It also became apparent that the expansion of services would have to be carried out in accordance with a rational plan so that the benefits of what could be a substantial capital investment could be maximized. Initially inter-municipal co-operation was used for the expansion of services and for planning. As the inadequacies of co-operation became apparent in the 1950s, a

two-tier government was initiated. Subsequently, in the late 1960s, the need for reassessment of local government in the metropolitan area produced proposals for a modified two-tier system (which was not adopted), and the introduced a radical new approach, a form of amalgamation in the interests of efficient service provision, but with decentralization of the political process to respond to the need for more open government, in which the citizens could participate.

Before discussing Winnipeg in detail, the metropolitan area which is the subject of this paper, it is essential to suggest how the effectiveness of local government should be assessed. In making this judgement it should be acknowledged that local governments have two main functions.[1] The first is the service function, the responsibility for providing an ever-widening range of services, of which the increase in the provision of social services is a marked characteristic of post-war society. The second function is political which has been defined as "that of managing conflict in matters of [local] public importance."[2] Although local politics does not always involve the management of conflict, it is important to remember that the difficult and interesting issues that need to be resolved usually involve some kind of conflict. These two roles differ and the management of local government affairs involves a continuing process of maintaining a balance between sometimes competing functions.

As this paper will include comments on the effectiveness of reform in Winnipeg, criteria need to be defined. Effectiveness can be judged by how well the government fulfills the function of maintaining the balance mentioned above, while demonstrating the following characteristics:

- **efficiency** in the economic sense, that is, an appropriate relationship between cost and benefit
- **responsiveness** or how well all shades of community opinion are reflected in municipal decisions
- **openness** or the extent to which municipal decisions are made in public and the extent to which all parties interested in the decision have access to the information available to the municipal decision-makers
- **representation** the extent to which the electoral system provides for the expression of all shades of community opinion
- **leadership**, an often overlooked characteristic

- **flexibility** or the degree to which the process of making local decisions allows for response to change or to peculiar circumstances in situations which may superficially appear to be the same
- **committment** or the degree to which municipal decision-makers observe the policies they establish, thus giving the citizens the assurance that like situations will be dealt with consistently and that programs will be persued energetically.

One additional point needs to be made by way of introduction. This is to emphasize the significance of the **behavioural** characteristics of both local governments and the senior, influential individuals involved, both elected and appointed. Emphasis on behaviour is consistent with the belief that, in the final analysis, it is the way in which **people** act and react in governing themselves that is important, particularly in local government where most of the decisions directly affecting the lives of the citizens are made.

Events during the period 1953 to 1967 will be described from the vantage point of a participant-observer, while the discussion of subsequent events draws upon a number of conversations with those who were directly involved. Although an honest attempt at objectivity has been made - and the passage of years has helped - certain biases which persist should be acknowledged.

This paper was influenced by a strong belief in the need for local government based on some 40 years of involvement as a planner, administrator and teacher. In passing it can be observed that, contrary to popular opinion, stupidity and corruption have been remarkably absent in the local governments it has been my duty to serve. A second bias is for the two-tier system - it provides greater flexibility to grow and adapt to changing circumstances than amalgamation, a system that favours larger bureaucracies, a tendency to centralize and less flexibility to adapt.

2. THE POST-WAR PERIOD

In the closing years of World War II the Manitoba government, in common with many other governments, established a Committee on Post-War

Reconstruction. This Committee consisted of the Deputy Ministers of Treasury, Mines and Natural Resources and Municipal Affairs. At times the Hon. Douglas Campbell, Minister of Agriculture and subsequently Premier, joined the Committee when agricultural issues were being discussed. Campbell's participation emphasizes the prevailing importance of agriculture, a priority which was to persist until the election of the Roblin government in 1959. A further insight into the prevailing political culture can be found in the fact that, until the advent of the Roblin government, the Province had operated on a "pay as you go" basis, and had next-to-no funded debt - a situation which sounds archaic, to say the least, in these days of multi-million funded debts. This fiscal conservatism was a direct effect of the traumatic experience of the depression years of the 1930s. In attempting to understand the political culture of this period, the impact of the pre-war depression on all those who experienced it, and particularly those responsible for local and provincial government must not be minimized. There was a real fear that the post-war period would usher in a second depression and that any plans to be implemented in this period would require ultra-conservative fiscal management.

For the purposes of this paper the most significant results of the work of the Committee were proposals for a metropolitan planning agency for Greater Winnipeg. It is interesting to note that in 1943, when the Committee decided to proceed with the idea of metropolitan planning, one of the members of the Committee, Murray Fisher, the Deputy Minister of Municipal Affairs, made a marginal notation on his agenda concerning the problem of handling the capital indebtedness of the individual municipalities "when the inevitable amalgamation took place" - an event which did not occur for some 30 years![3]

In addition to the members of the Committee, two members of the faculty of the University of Manitoba, Milton J. Osborne, an architect, and W.J. Waines, an economist, acted as staff advisors and drafted the memorandum which discussed the need for both metropolitan planning and metropolitan government. A comparison of the first and final drafts of this document show how it was influenced by the current political culture; the initial draft clearly indicated the need for a unified organization for the administration of public services in the metropolitan area, while the final version which was released

for discussion did not advocate a metropolitan form of government but proposed a study of the metropolitan problem and emphasized that participation in the study would not commit anyone to accept the conclusions that would be reached. References to organization and administration and to the possibility of amalgamation as an alternative method of solving the problems of administration which appeared in the first draft did not appear in the final version.[4]

Although the group of senior provincial officials who comprised the Committee saw the need for reforming local government in Winnipeg to face the challenges of the future, their final statement reflected the cautious conservatism of the day and advocated study without committment and the use of gentle persuasion. The memorandum was circulated among the municipalities in Greater Winnipeg and they were invited to meet with the Committee to discuss it.

Reflecting on this period some 30 years later, Dr. Waines commented:

> The development of the memorandum represents not only the reactions of the members of our Committee, but also reactions of some aldermen and councillors whom I consulted from time to time. For example, Alderman Hebert of St. Boniface was of great assistance. He believed in municipal co-operation and was sensitive to political realities. One of the problems was the fear on the part of the other municipalities that [with] any kind of reorganization or even co-operative effort, Winnipeg would dominate them. Hebert was quite conscious of this fear but did not personally accept it as fact. I think he felt that St. Boniface could handle itself. In any case he saw great benefits to each municipality singly and together in co-operative planning. Alderman Jacob Penner, later on, was a great help in persuading Winnipeg to come along with the project.5

At a meeting in October 1943, eleven municipalities attended and accepted the idea of metropolitan planning.[6] It was decided to form a **Metropolitan Planning Committee** with two representatives from each of the participating municipalities. Any form of representation by population was considered to be inappropriate for planning and equal representation persisted throughout the life of the Commission.

Although Dr. Waines and Ralph Pearson, the Deputy Provincial Treasurer, represented the provincial government at the initial meetings, the Province made it clear that it expected the Planning Committee to be self-sustaining. The Province contributed $2,800 to the initial budget of the Committee. The balance of the $14,000 budget was shared among the participating municipalities on a per capita basis.

In 1944 the Metropolitan Planning Committee formed a Joint Executive Committee with the Town Planning Commission of the City of Winnipeg, which had been established in May 1944. The Winnipeg Commission and the Metropolitan Committee agreed to share staff and to work in close co-operation. The Executive Committee appointed Eric Thrift, a local architect who had been involved in the work of the Provincial Committee on Post-War Reconstruction, as Director, a position be held until 1959.

In addition to Dr. Waines, Alderman Penner of Winnipeg, Alderman Hebert of St. Boniface and Mr. Cecil E. Joslyn, a member appointed by Winnipeg, formed a Joint Executive Committee. It was the political skill, tact and diplomacy of these men, supported by the Director, Eric Thrift, that held together the loosely knit co-operative association of very diverse municipalities.

In 1944, Mr. Earl O. Mills of St. Louis, Missouri, was appointed consultant to the Metropolitan Planning Committee for the preparation of the Master Plan. One of the first things that Mills did on his appointment was to emphasize the importance of the participation of informed and concerned citizens in the plan-making process. In a circular letter sent to organizations and individuals, Dr. Waines, as Chairman of the Joint Executive Committee, asked for names of citizens to serve on eight committees which would assist with the planning tasks. These were:

1. Economic development
2. Streets, highways and traffic, including local transit and transportation by rail, water, motor and air
3. Parks, recreation and schools
4. Housing and neighbourhood development
5. Zoning
6. Public buildings, institutions and city appearance
7. Urban land problems and tax delinquent land
8. Long-range public works, program and budget.

In his letter, Dr. Waines commented: "Mr. Mills has suggested, and we fully agree, that the citizens of Winnipeg should be given every opportunity of expressing their ideas and suggestions for the benefit of the planning officials."

This letter written in 1944, with its advocacy of citizen participation and of a comprehensive planning program, has a very contemporary sound. Citizen participation as it was practiced at that time was forthcoming and during the period 1945-50 some 200 citizens, selected because of their expertise and interest, participated in the work of the committees. Today's advocates of citizen participation may wish to criticize this exercise in involvement on the grounds that it was structured and selective; only those citizens with known expertise or interest were invited to participate and implications of "elite-ism" can be made. However, even to contemporary eyes the plans that they produced are of a very good quality and had greater impact on the growth of the metropolitan community than might be expected for a document which was to be essentially advisory. A number of its provisions such as metropolitan thoroughfares and general distribution of land-use provided the foundation for subsequent planning by Metro and Unicity.

In 1949 the Metropolitan Planning Commission of Greater Winnipeg (MPC) was established by provincial legislation. The MPC had two roles: to prepare the Metropolitan Master Plan and revise it when necessary; and, to provide professional planning advice to the member municipalities on their local planning problems and on the metropolitan implications of these local problems. Although the Joint Executive Committee was not incorporated into the structure established by legislation, liaison with the City of Winnipeg Town Planning Commission was ensured by there being four members of the Winnipeg Commission on the MPC and by the sharing of professional and technical staff. The co-ordinating function of the MPC was also subsequently strengthened by representation from other metropolitan agencies, namely the Greater Winnipeg Transit Commission, the Greater Winnipeg Water and Sanitary Districts and subsequently, the Emergency Measures Organization of Greater Winnipeg.

3. PROVINCIAL-MUNICIPAL COMMITTEE - 1951

The most significant next step in the 1950s was the formation of the Provincial-Municipal Committee in 1951 and in particular the report of its exploratory subcommittee on Organization of Local Government Services in the Greater Winnipeg area. The membership of this subcommittee which was under the chairmanship of Alderman C.E. Simonite of the City of Winnipeg, comprised Elswood F. Bole, former mayor of the municipality of St. Vital; P.F.C. Byers who was then Secretary-Treasurer, City of East Kildonan; Murray Fisher, Q.C., Deputy Minister of Municipal Affairs; and, W.C. Lorimer who was then the Administrative Assistant for the School District of Winnipeg.

The subcommittee met a number of times between 1951 and 1953 and produced a report which reviewed the situation in Metropolitan Winnipeg, discussed similar problems elsewhere in Canada, particularly in Montreal, Ottawa and Toronto, mentioned what was already being done by way of co-ordination of metropolitan services, discussed the use of ad hoc boards and commissions and reviewed the possibility of extending this method to other services.

The report of the subcommittee then went on to stress the need for co-ordination within the metropolitan area and to discuss how this could be achieved. The alternatives that it presented are worth summarizing.

First, the entire area could be amalgamated into a political unit. The subcommittee did not favour this as "judging from the experience of eastern cities where such action has been carried out it appears likely that it will bring a sharp increase in costs without a commensurate increase in the benefits received."[7]

Second, the committee discussed whether the concept of special-purpose boards and commissions should be extended with the establishment of a town planning and zoning board which would have representation from all municipalities and would have mandatory powers over such matters as "location of highways, streets, sewers and water facilities, parks, zoning, etc. within

the area of its jurisdiction." The subcommittee also opposed this idea on the grounds that overall co-ordination of effort would not be fully achieved as long as there existed a number of independent boards each having full authority over some specific metropolitan service.

Third, the subcommittee favoured the establishment of a single metropolitan board which would supercede all existing metropolitan boards and commissions and be responsible for all services now being administered by these bodies together with any other services which might in future be organized on a metropolitan basis.

> Participation in the board would be mandatory for all municipalities as defined as being within the metropolitan area and any order promulgated by the board would be binding upon the municipalities concerned although provisions would exist for appeals. The board would have the power to impose levies on the municipalities within its jurisdiction thus ensuring an equitable distribution of costs of services. The board would also be authorized to borrow...broadly speaking the metropolitan board would have complete jurisdiction over all services which are of metropolitan concern and would have all financial and administrative powers necessary to discharge its responsibility fully.8

The subcommittee went on to outline a method of representation on the metropolitan board which would be based on "the assessment and population of respective municipalities." It also recommended that provision should be made at the outset for increasing the representation and/or the voting power of any municipality according to the growth of its assessment and population. It is interesting to note that the use of assessment in addition to population as a basis for representation was not applied in any of the subsequent reorganizations of local government. It should also be noted that the subcommittee was primarily concerned with the provision of services. Contemporary concern for the political role and for participatory democracy was not reflected in the thinking of that day.

The subcommittee laid particular stress on the need for planning both in the metropolitan area and in the remainder of the province. Again the subcommittee was the only group among those who reported on metropolitan problems during the period under study who stressed the need for a corresponding level of planning **outside** the metropolitan area. It is ironical

to note that it took some twenty years before the provincial government decided to undertake a planning study of the region that surrounds metropolitan Winnipeg. Though written in 1953, the sub-committee's concern for this aspect of planning is still relevant:

> Aside from the need for a provincial planning authority to safeguard the metropolitan area against harmful action or inaction by adjacent municipalities, the fact is that such an authority could prove a substantial benefit to a great many organized municipalities throughout the Province. Through a lack of proper planning a number of municipalities even now are labouring under considerable disadvantages....Housing and other developments are being carried out on the outskirts of incorporated urban municipalities leading to the creation of traffic hazards and usually an undesirable "fringe" settlement which contributes little or nothing to municipal finance but expects to participate equally in fire, police, school and other services maintained by the municipalities.9

The subcommittee also had something to say about amalgamating certain of the metropolitan municipalities whose tax base was inadequate to provide these services which should be available in an urban area. It also commented on situations where there was a great disparity in the wealth and tax revenues of municipalities. Amalgamation would result in a more equitable sharing of revenues and costs in these instances.

> Where a very large firm or firms established itself in a small municipality with the consequence that its employees live in a adjoining municipality where adequate residential, school, shopping and other facilities are available. In these situations substantial inequity results from the fact that the municipality in which the firm locates obtains all the tax revenue while the adjoining municipalities receive no such revenue but are burdened by the employees' demand for services.10

The committee went on to point out that this was not a hypothetical situation but actually existed in the metropolitan area and in fact continued to exist until complete amalgamation into Unicity Winnipeg in 1971.

Finally, the subcommittee pointed out that, "it must be recognized, however, that the solutions proposed herein may become outdated by events or may in practice prove less successful than presently anticipated."[11] It went on to recommend a regular review at say, ten yearly intervals. "Such a review would constitute a logical compliment to the work of the subcommittee and would be part of that democratic evolutionary process by which we adjust a

governmental institution to changed times and circumstances." The idea of periodic review was incorporated into subsequent reforms, and is general in reform legislation across Canada. Continuous review and adjustment has never been formally proposed even though, in practice, minor legislative adjustments are made frequently. It is suggested that continuous review, preferably carried out by an external "audit" agency with the power to implement vested in the local government itself, would enable more effective adaptation to change and would prevent the "crisis" atmosphere that frequently attends the hearings of a review commission - with the associated opportunity for political "grandstanding."

Reading the subcommittee report with the wisdom of hindsight, one is tempted to question why it was necessary to wait for some seven years and the report of another investigating group before taking action to alleviate the situation that existed in Metropolitan Winnipeg, and that the subcommittee so clearly described. However, although "in all the world there is no greater force than an idea whose time has come," the idea must wait for the time.

4. COMMENTARY AND EVALUATION - THE METROPOLITAN PLANNING COMMISSION OF GREATER WINNIPEG

In reviewing the planning of this period it is essential to keep in mind the "state of the art" in the early 1950s. The "civic reform" viewpoint still prevailed, that planning should be kept free from the taint of day-to-day politics and that citizen participation should be structured and selective. The mood of the period was cautious optimism. The anticipated post-war depression had not occurred and civic leaders found themselves in the encouraging position of being able to look forward to a near future when the building of a better world might become far more than political rhetoric. The urban problems of the late 1960s were not yet apparent - or apparent only to a discerning few who tended to be regarded as Jeremiahs in a period which seemed, at last, to be the beginning of better times to come.

Over the decade of the life of the Metropolitan Planning Commission, there was no shortage of metropolitan planning - the weaknesses lay in the implementation of the plans. It was believed that, if plans were prepared by a group of municipalities sharing a common interest in the growth of a metropolitan area, then implementation would be inevitable. This proved to be a naive assumption. However, the co-operative approach did work in those instances where the enlightened self-interest of a group of member municipalities coincided. This can be seen in the development of parts of the major thoroughfare system which, though it had deficiencies, did provide a sound basis for the subsequent work of the Metropolitan government. The results of co-operation were also apparent in a reasonably standard system of land-use control developed over the years by the MPC staff enacted in a series of individual municipal zoning by-laws.

The co-operative approach did not work, however, when large, expensive public works such as new river crossings or sewage treatment works, were needed but where the sharing of cost among the metropolitan municipalities, or among a group of them who would benefit most directly, was dependent on co-operative decisions.

This was not surprising; not only was this the result of municipal unwillingness to face up to the fiscal implications of metropolitan planning as some critics have suggested, but also the municipal politicians saw their prime mandate as the provision of municipal services within their own boundaries. This was what they were elected to do. Apart from the contributions to the cost of the MPC's operations, a large part of which was justified, in their view, by professional services received for local planning problems, there was little left in the municipal budget for the secondary goal of implementing metropolitan plans, particularly when those plans would result in no immediate and visible advantage to the municipality concerned.

One example of the problem of attempting to implement metropolitan plans on a co-operative basis will suffice. In 1953 the Metropolitan Planning Commission in association with the provincial government decided that a traffic and transit survey of Metropolitan Winnipeg should be undertaken.

An extensive study was carried out and a very large number of recommendations were presented. Both the provincial government and the local governments comprising the membership of the Metropolitan Planning Commission praised the quality and appropriateness of the recommendations. However, only those dealing with traffic and parking in the central area of the City of Winnipeg were implemented because the responsibility for them lay solely within one local jurisdiction, and no major capital works were involved.

Another continuing problem, voluntary participation in the work of the MPC, should be mentioned. Even in 1953 when the author joined the staff of the Metropolitan Planning Commission, the beginning of the year was still a time of crisis, when all of the skills of the leaders of the group were necessary to persuade the municipal members to continue to participate and share the cost for another year. This year-to-year existence did not, however, seem to inhibit the Metropolitan Planning Commission's ability to take a long planning perspective or to produce, by 1950, what was probably the first and one of the very few, Metropolitan Master Plans in North America.

The Manitoba Planning Act provided that any municipality that wished to plan - mandatory planning both in Manitoba and in other provinces is relatively recent - must appoint a Town Planning Commission with a majority of lay members. It is in the work of the MPC with many of these local Commissions that substantial achievement can be seen. The Annual Reports of the MPC show that land-use controls were developed and improved, subdivision design was advanced from the standard grid to other contemporary patterns including developments of Clarence Stein's super-block. In fact one of the most complete and successful applications of super-block principles in North America can be seen in Winnipeg at Wildewood, in the former suburb of Fort Garry. School and park planning was also advanced and the true nature of comprehensive local and metropolitan planning was battled out in a series of late night Commission meetings of the kind familiar to anyone active in planning in the 1950s.

Although in theory the Commissions were not intended to be political, their role as a training ground for local politics - and as a means of keeping out-of-office politicians in touch - should not be over-looked. Although the Commission was intended as a device to protect planning from the "taint of politics," the political role of local government could not be denied. Not only were the actions of the Commissions part of the total political process but often citizen members of Commissions subsequently ran for office in local and provincial elections. Furthermore, it was through the discussions in the MPC and in the local Commissions that the need for some form of metropolitan government was articulated. Gradually over the decade of the 1950s, the limitations of co-operation, and the growing urgency of the unresolved metropolitan issues related to both the scope and the rate of growth, forced a realization that some form of metropolitan government must be provided.

To summarize the situation that prevailed towards the end of the 1950s, the majority of those involved or concerned with local government in Winnipeg were coming to the realization that there was a need for some form of metropolitan government. Services which could be provided better on a metropolitan basis could be identified. The need was acknowledged to provide a political decision-making system with boundaries co-terminus with the metropolitan area. Co-ordination was necessary for those services which, while remaining primarily the responsibilities of the municipalities, did have certain aspects or implications which were metropolitan in nature.

Although not a <u>de facto</u> government, the MPC in exercising its own responsibilities and through influence on the other metropolitan special-purpose agencies, was a component in the local government system and can, therefore, be evaluated according to the criteria described in the "Introduction."

It was **efficient** in that it supplied both metropolitan and local planning advice with a very small staff. Efficiency was ensured by the nature of its funding system. Municipalities usually based their continuing financial support on the perceived value of services received in the previous year. The notable exception was the City of Winnipeg, which provided the foundation

support for the MPC throughout its life. This consistent support is very much to the credit of the succession of aldermanic and lay members who represented Winnipeg on the MPC.

It was reasonably **responsive** in that the membership of MPC and its close working connection with most of the municipal planning commissions provided a wide spectrum of opinion.

In commenting on the lack of **openness and representation**, it should be pointed out that this was a criticism of local government generally at that time. As has been indicated in the preceding discussion, **leadership** was exercised, particularly in identifying and articulating the need for local government reform.

Flexibility is evidenced in the variety of physical designs that the MPC produced in response to differing local conditions and influences; it can also be seen in the evolution of the MPCs approach to planning and how it responded to new ideas and to change. Even with a small budget, funds were found to allow members and staff to attend out-of-town meetings and conferences in order to keep up with changes in planning thinking. The MPC also played a role in the development of planning in Canada and the involvement of its Director, Eric Thrift, in the establishment of the Community Planning Association of Canada and the post-war revival of the Town Planning Institute of Canada should be acknowledged. While receiving the benefit of close association with the development of Canadian planning, a corresponding contribution was made.

Community planning is a strange activity, both in the political and the professional sense. The planner often has difficulty in identifying for the layman the value and successes of the activity. Unlike other professions, there is no readily accepted measure of success, or failure for that matter. Although past situations can be used to illustrate what happens without planning, direct comparison is difficult. This is not an argument identifying the problems of planning, but rather to support the view that continuing **commitment** on behalf of both political and professional participants is

essential if the activity is to be successful. The record of achievement of the MPC, both in planning itself and in making the case for local government reform is evidence of strong and continuing commitment.

5. THE GREATER WINNIPEG INVESTIGATING COMMISSION - 1955

Following the presentation of the report of the subcommittee on organization of Local Government Services in the Greater Winnipeg Area, there was an abortive attempt to form a metropolitan exploratory committee, but this was not successful mainly due to the inability of the committee to decide how to finance the further work that it considered necessary. However, the need for local government reform in Metropolitan Winnipeg continued to be a lively topic, and in 1955 the provincial government appointed the Greater Winnipeg Investigating Commission. The Commission consisted of five representatives from the area municipalities and although all of those appointed to the Commission were known to the provincial government and had informal political connections at the provincial level, there was no identified "provincial" representative on the Commission. It seemed that the provincial government was of the opinion that reorganization of local government in metropolitan Winnipeg was essentially a local problem to be resolved by local people. The provincial government, by Order-in-Council, appointed a Greater Winnipeg Investigating Commission consisting of five persons whose names had been selected from a list submitted by municipalities. The members were as follows:

a) J.L. Brodie - former Mayor of East Kildonan, became Chairman
b) J.G. Van Beleghem - Mayor of St. Boniface
c) Thomas Findlay - Mayor of St. James
d) C.M. Kushner, Q.C. - then a councillor and subsequently Mayor of West Kildonan
e) George E. Sharpe - Mayor of the City of Winnipeg.

The Commission was given broad terms of reference to look into the whole field of relevant facts, matters, issues and legislation relating to the municipal, inter-municipal and public school government administration of the cities of Winnipeg and St. Boniface and the existing or potential urban areas

of any adjacent municipalities which in the opinion of the Commission had or may have had certain interests and responsibilities in common. The Order-in-Council further clarified the responsibilities of the Commission by instructing them to make findings and recommendations with respect to

> the geographical definition of the area which now or in future should comprise the Metropolitan urban area of Greater Winnipeg...whether it would be advisable to have all or any municipal, inter-municipal or public school units governments in the metropolitan area amalgamated or their boundaries altered...whether it would be advisable to establish some form of metropolitan government...and if some such metropolitan authority is approved by the Commission, to make recommendations as to the subject matter of which the authority should have jurisdiction and the extent of such jurisdiction, the composition of the governing body of the authority, the manner of appointing or electing the members of governing bodies, their terms of office and the representation on the governing body of the component municipalities and school districts in the metropolitan area, whether municipal services should be the responsibility of such metropolitan authority, the method of proportioning the costs among the municipal units within the metropolitan area, the power of the metropolitan authority to borrow money, issue debentures and make levies against the municipalities or property within the metropolitan area.12

The Order-in-Council further indicated that

> if the commission decides against recommending amalgamation...or against the establishing of any form of metropolitan government in the metropolitan area, to make such recommendations as would, in its opinion, provide better co-ordination and efficiency in the administration of municipal, inter-municipal and public school services common to or desirable for the municipalities in the school districts of the proposed metropolitan area and provide better local government for the citizens of the metropolitan area.13

The Commission was also instructed to draft any necessary legislation and was given what seems, in contemporary terms, a modest budget of $15,000 to carry out its work.

In the course of its examination the Commission travelled in Great Britain and Europe and also in Canada and the United States. It paid particular attention to the recently formed metropolitan government in Toronto. In addition to holding formal public hearings in Winnipeg, there was considerable informal consultation with knowledgeable people in the Winnipeg metropolitan area and other places, notably in Toronto.

In its list of acknowledgements the Commission mentions particularly the co-operation received by the two daily papers, the Winnipeg Free Press and the **Winnipeg Tribune**. These two newspapers provided excellent coverage of the work of the Commission and ensured that there was no lack of information. The news stories and the editorial pages of both newspapers gave frequent coverage to the need for re-organization of local government. In particular, a series of editorial articles by Arthur Fletcher of the **Winnipeg Free Press** was republished by that newspaper in a pamphlet entitled Greater Winnipeg - How Shall it Grow.

In addition to receiving a substantial volume of data from many sources, the Commission appointed its own Director of Research, Dr. Ruben Bellan of the Department of Economics, University of Manitoba, who, with the help of the small staff, was responsible for the data collection and research which formed the basis of the **Report**.

In the "Foreword" to its **Report**, the Commission developed the case for metropolitan government, quoting a number of American references and a fewer number of Canadian sources. It should be remembered that the deliberations of the Commission took place during a decade when the movement for metropolitan government was particularly strong in the United States and before the difficulties, if not the impossibilities, of adopting this government reform in the majority of US cases had been realized. The Commission mentioned that it attended the first National Conference on Metropolitan Problems, held in the United States at East Lansing, Michigan.

Nor did the Commission rely entirely on contemporary references to develop the case for metropolitan government. It found an appropriate quotation from the prophet Isaiah (chapter 5, verse 8), "woe unto them that join house to house, that lay field to field till there be no place that they may be placed alone in the midst of the earth."

Having first traced the growth of metropolitan Winnipeg from the very early fur trading days to 1955, the Commission then summarized the economic prospects of the community. In a forecast of some accuracy, it saw no

significant increase in value of grain handling. It also foresaw the decline of the value of work carried out in local railway repair shops and the unlikelihood of any expansion in the value of aircraft repair and overhaul work carried out in Winnipeg by TCA (now Air Canada). In a more positive vein it forecast a beneficial effect on Winnipeg's economy by the completion of the St. Lawrence Seaway, some growth in the manufacturing of clothing, foodstuffs, furniture and housewares, and the continued growth of Winnipeg's financial institutions which predominately served western Canada.

The Order-in-Council establishing the Commission did not define the basis of the need for the inquiry, but merely stated in its preamble that such an inquiry was deemed to be in the public interest. So one has to look to the Report of the Commission itself for discussion of the need for reorganization.

The commission stressed that "the speed and direction of Winnipeg's economic growth would be heavily effected by governmental policies and economic trends, none of which can be predicted with assurance"[14] and stressed that the prosperity and growth of Greater Winnipeg was closely tied to that of Western Canada as a whole. A separate chapter was provided in the Commission's Report dealing with the history of local government in Greater Winnipeg and this was followed by a similar history of the development of the school districts. The current operations of the municipalities and the school districts were analyzed statistically, as was the provision of the municipal welfare services. Although the Report discussed in some detail certain local services such as engineering, protection to persons and property, assessment and recreation, no specific mention is made of planning.

In discussing the provision of hydroelectric power, the Commission pointed out the problem inherent in the prevailing arrangement by which the Manitoba Power Commission supplied the Province of Manitoba including the suburban municipalities with the exception of the City of Winnipeg; the City of Winnipeg having its own hydroelectric supply and distribution system. Although there was co-operation between the two systems, this separation of what should logically have been one hydroelectric supply system for the entire metropolitan area had caused serious problems. The commission's Report also

discussed at some length the cooperative inter-municipal arrangements that had been developed over the years.

Municipal expenditures and borrowing were examined in some det l and the final sections of the Report discussed present and future proble.s. Bearing in mind the significance of the report of the Investigating Commission - it documented the need for reform and provided strong recommendations backed by the experience and prestige of the commissioners, all of whom held senior elected office.

The concluding part of the Report dealt with anticipated problems and discussed the need for intermunicipal co-operation, not only co-operation between differing municipalities but a "co-ordinated effort on the part of the administrators of all public services." Each public service was considered to be "complex and many faceted and had ramifications which reach into and affect all other services."

> Proper municipal administration in the Greater Winnipeg community requires a co-ordinated approach, so that each individual service is seen, not as unique and independent, but as part of an overall effort to provide for the general well-being of the community. Failure to adopt such a co-ordinated approach may well result in the aggravation of problems as officials in charge in one public service deal with their problems by procedures which create so many difficulties in the administration of other services as to render the overall situation worse than before. Thus for instance, we may build broad freeways to solve problems in traffic flow thereby bringing into being impossible problems of downtown parking.15

Like its predecessor the subcommittee of the Provincial-Municipal Committee, the Commission stressed the inequitable distribution of municipally collected revenues and pointed out that one municipality might collect the revenues from a particular industrial or commercial enterprise while the services to its employees were provided by an entirely different municipality. It then developed the arguments supporting the view that there was inequitable distribution of financial burden on municipalities in the metropolitan area. Major streets and bridges were singled out as an example, "one municipality may bear the entire cost of some facility which is freely available to residents of another municipality and indeed, to anyone within the

metropolitan area. Major streets and bridges were singled out as an example, "one municipality may bear the entire cost of some facility which is freely available to residents of another municipality and indeed, to anyone within the metropolitan area. The streets of one municipality may be intensively used by outsiders who contribute nothing towards the cost and maintenance of roadways and to the costs of traffic control - costs for which they are responsible."[16]

The Commission went on to point out that although the provincial government had contributed to the cost of constructing and maintaining a number of urban thoroughfares and bridges which formed links in the provincial highway system, these contributions had always been given on an ad hoc basis rather than based on the terms of a general formula. In other words, in each case the municipalities concerned had to negotiate with the provincial government. The Commission also pointed out that "even with the provincial contribution, such construction projects had involved heavy costs for the municipalities concerned."

The fact that major recreation facilities such as Kildonan Park and Assiniboine Park were financed by the City of Winnipeg but were enjoyed by the whole metropolitan area, was stressed. It was also pointed out that the City of Winnipeg made contributions to a number of local cultural and recreational enterprises which benefited the whole metropolitan area.

The inequity inherent in social welfare costs were also stressed. The Commission pointed out that the incidence of persons needing welfare was particularly heavy in Winnipeg and to a lesser extent in St. Boniface. "In these cities, especially in the former, there exists a great number of large old homes which have been converted into cheap rooming houses or divided into low grade suites. Families in the lowest income brackets generally seek out this accommodation because it is the cheapest they can obtain."[17]

In other words, low income families and those who were in reduced circumstances for a wide variety of reasons, gravitated to Winnipeg and to a lesser degree, St. Boniface, because these were the only places where

accommodation that they could afford, could be found. In passing, it is as well to mention that at the time that the Commission was studying the situation, no public housing had been built anywhere in the metropolitan Winnipeg area.

The Commission's Report also stated that a number of nursing homes were concentrated in Winnipeg and St. Boniface and these institutions catered to considerable numbers of older persons, many of whom came from rural Manitoba and may of whom required some form of public aid. The Report acknowledged that increases in provincial contributions to municipal welfare costs had reduced the inequity but had not eliminated it entirely.

Inequities in the sharing of costs of flood protection was a problem peculiar to Greater Winnipeg. The municipalities bordering the Red and Assiniboine Rivers were responsible for the full cost of maintaining the dikes within their boundaries and the Report indicated that "the burden on St. Vital and Fort Garry is particularly heavy since both of these municipalities have extensive Red River frontage and are obliged to build and maintain lengthy dykes."[18] At the time, these two municipalities were predominately residential in character and suffered from an imbalance in the residential and the non-residential parts of their assessment base. The Commission said that "flood waters do not pay attention to municipal boundaries" and that the defenses maintained by the riparian municipalities benefitted those who had no river frontage.

A number of examples of wasteful duplication in the provision of local services were pointed out, specifically the proliferation of garbage disposal sites and water pumping stations. Duplication of engineering equipment was also noted.

A problem which was relatively new at the time, was discussed; the undesirable proximity of industry and housing. The Report stated that "this problem is of relatively recent origin, until about 1950 there was an ample supply of serviced land in many localities in Greater Winnipeg, mostly serviced by sewer and water lines laid down before 1969, many of them

installed prior to 1914 - a legacy from preceding land booms."[19] Builders had an ample choice of lots and were "under no pressures to develop streets because they could be serviced most economically, however unsuitable they might be otherwise."[20] This situation had changed and the Commission illustrated that private developers' ability to acquire substantial blocks of land that could then be serviced and developed economically was the principle determinant of a location of urban growth. For example, "private enterprise recently developed acreage in St. Boniface [Windsor Park] despite serious drawbacks inherent in the site. One of the attractions was the fact that an area was comprised of several large parcels which could be purchased from the owners at reasonable cost; in other words - that the area being in large parcels made the physical development more economical."[21] There were certain areas such as Charleswood, which, in the view of the Commission, would be excellent residential areas but could not be developed because "the municipal corporation is too weak financially to take on large scale land servicing, and the division of land in the numerous small individually owned properties rendered development unattractive to private enterprise."[22]

The Commission also pointed out that without metropolitan control of industrial development "a municipality may authorize the establishment within its limits of industry which imposes an inconvenience or cost on the residents of other municipalities and the latter may be unable to obtain effective redress."[23] Air pollution from oil refineries and the special sewage disposal problems caused by the sugar refinery in Fort Garry were quoted as examples.

The practice of giving tax concessions in order to attract industry was criticized, "this practice has two unfortunate consequences, it may lead to the erection of plants in unsuitable locations and enable large firms to contribute to the public revenue of the metropolitan community less than they could or should." It was also observed that "it is probably unnecessary in most or all cases to grant tax concessions to firms to induce them to settle in the Greater Winnipeg area; industrial firms are induced to come here by compelling economic considerations such as the availability of labour, raw materials and accessability to markets. With or without tax concessions they would locate somewhere in the Greater Winnipeg area. From the point of view

of the metropolitan community, therefore, tax concessions would not really attract new firms to Greater Winnipeg but instead merely enable them to pay lower municipal taxes than they could pay and would pay if so required. One municipality gains but the area as a whole loses."[24]

While dealing with the general topic of the control of development, the undesirability of ribbon development was stressed, as was the undesirability of "spotty, low quality development on the fringe of the metropolitan area."

The problems resulting from the maintenance of separate fire and police departments were mentioned, as was the fact that the City of Winnipeg's fire department, through a series of special agreements and arrangements, was, in fact, providing a form of metropolitan fire protection. However, it was questionable whether the contributions paid by the other municipalities to Winnipeg for this service really covered an appropriate share of stand-by costs.

In discussing the problems related to police protection, the Commission made the distinction between the protection of persons and property and criminal detection work. The fact that crime did not respect municipal boundaries was stressed and that crime detection work is specialized "requiring highly trained and experienced men, a small suburban municipality normally has little need for such personnel on its police force and does not have them; when a major crime is committed in such a municipality, the local police force may therefore deal with inadequately trained detectives."[25] The informal assistance provided by the City of Winnipeg was acknowledged.

Related to police work was the control of traffic which was fragmented, leading to bottlenecks and to an illogical variation in parking restrictions. The inability of the metropolitan area to develop a coherent system of main thoroughfares was also mentioned. There had been some co-operation in the provision of inter-municipal thoroughfares but it was the failure in co-operation on street widths and traffic regulations which induced bottlenecks and resulted in traffic tie-ups.

Finally, the wide variation in the quality of library service provided throughout the metropolitan area was stressed, as was the fact that there was no co-ordination of effort between Winnipeg and the suburban libraries. At this time, only the City of Winnipeg provided anything like an adequate reference library, and this could be used by suburban residents only after the payment of a non-resident fee.

In concluding its analysis of existing problems, the Commission quite properly summarized all of these under the heading "lack of an organization responsible for dealing with problems which affect Greater Winnipeg as a whole," and pointed out that "when new problems arose they were handled belatedly by ad-hoc organizations created by the provincial government, or through the tardy, unwilling and suspicious co-operation of municipal governments."[26] If these words sound somewhat harsh it should be recalled that the Commissioners were talking about the municipal administrations which they were leading.

Following the discussion of present problems, the Commission's Report then turned to prospective problems and commented on the range of these resulting from increased growth. In discussing where this growth would be located, they acknowledged that a substantial amount of new population was likely to be accommodated in apartments in the central parts of the City of Winnipeg, thus increasing the resident population of the central city. "Although much of the new residential and industrial growth would take place in the suburbs, this would not mean that the city would be unaffected."[27] The expansion of population in the suburbs would also render necessary the expansion of centrally located facilities which serve the entire metropolitan area. "It will become necessary to enlarge hospital capacity, auditorium space and downtown parking facilities; it will become necessary to build additional bridges across rivers, throughways in the downtown area, and to widen central arterial streets in order to accommodate increased traffic flow to and from the expanding [sub]urban areas."[28]

An unusual but interesting group of observations was made under the heading, "The Mistakes Which May Be Made." The Report warned that these could

result in excessive costs, great inconvenience or the inequitable distribution of financial burdens amongst the members of the metropolitan community. In addition to the mistakes based on forecasting errors or failure to respond to what the Commission described as reasonable anticipations, "the mistakes may be made in a consequence of the fact that the authorities responsible for development are lacking in experience or are financially restricted. Mistakes may be made because one individual small group manages to promote its private interests to the detriment of the community as a whole."[29] Specifically, the problems attendant on undesirable fringe development, the excessive installation of septic tanks and unsuitable location of industry and housing, were discussed. The problems resulting from the construction of public facilities of inadequate capacity and from developing in uneconomic sequence were mentioned. In discussing this group of problems, the Commission made an observation which though quite realistic at the time, now sounds a little unreal; it discussed the problems resulting from serviced land lying undeveloped and accumulating heavy interest charges with no corresponding benefit being yielded.

As an urban area grows some of the services which are provided by suburban municipalities at low cost, or which are not provided at all, have to be improved or must be provided in new ways at a higher cost. Garbage disposal and the disposal of sanitary sewage are examples, although this concern would be applicable to almost any municipal service. It is also interesting to note that the Commission commented on the probability of the need for new services, particularly in the social welfare field. For example, it commented on the fact that "there may be few retarded children in a small community and nothing is done for them since their number may be too small to justify the establishment of a special institution for them; as the community grows, however, the number of such children will be correspondingly larger until the time comes when there are enough such children to justify the organization of special services for them."[30]

Although criteria were not specified, the desirability of "efficient" services occurs frequently in the discussion, as does the need for true "economy." In a number of cases there is an oblique reference to the question

of quality of services and, particularly in the paragraphs dealing with education, there is a clear indication that the Commission was concerned, as has been mentioned, with social problems such as the need for adequate specialized education for children with particular learning problems.

To the contemporary reader this discussion of present and future problems is lacking in two obvious ways. First, there is no mention of public participation in the affairs of local government, and, as has been said before, the lack of concern for this is an accurate reflection of the prevailing attitudes at the time the Report was written. The second deficiency is, however, more serious because it indicates a deficiency in thinking of the Commission. There is no specific reference to the need for co-ordinated comprehensive planning for the provision of public services and for the control of capital borrowing. It is true that throughout the Report there are many oblique references to co-ordinated planning but for some reason, the word "planning" is rarely used. The word is only used as a sub-heading in a section dealing with "Construction of Public Works" where there is a brief discussion of the need for an overall infrastructure plan.

This deficiency may be due, in part, to the prevailing view that planning was primarily concerned with the preparation and administration of regulations to control the use of lands and buildings through zoning, and with the physical design of residential areas and the location of rights-of-way for new services and facilities. Planning as a co-ordinating and integrating activity was not clearly understood nor was the contemporary view of planning as the management of an ongoing process of urban change generally accepted.

As has been mentioned earlier, the Metropolitan Planning Commission had provided a forum for the discussion of the need for a level of government to implement metropolitan plans. Its function as provider of professional planning advice to the member municipalities was also understood and valued. The lack of detailed discussion of planning function may have resulted from a view that it was well taken care of by the existing arrangements, and that all that was necessary was to include the Planning Commission in the list of

special-purpose Boards and Commissions whose functions were to be taken over by a metropolitan council.

It may be appropriate to comment here that in the author's experience the Commission's somewhat limited view of planning carried over to the following decade of metropolitan government, and certainly in the earlier days of that government there was resistance to the idea that planning really was something far broader than preparing zoning by-laws and designing sub-divisions. In retrospect, it can be said that the central position of fiscal planning and its direct relationship to the planning of physical and social services was never clearly articulated and understood.

Having commented on the lack of discussion of public participation in the affairs of local government, there is an interesting passing reference in the subsequent section of the Commission's Report dealing with "The Alternatives Available." "Local government should provide public services efficiently, but efficiency is not the sole objective. The services provided must be those **which the people want**"[31] (emphasis added). "Mere efficiency in the provision of public services is of little merit if the public does not want the service. The capacity of assess what the public wants is at least as important as the capacity to serve those wants effectively."[32] Subsequent observations seem to indicate that the capacity to assess what the public wants would be adequately served by "attracting worthy and able people into public life."

While stating that "a system of local government must be judged by a broad variety of criteria," it is unfortunate that the Commission did not attempt to be specific about these criteria. Had they done so, an interesting comparison could have been made between their criteria and those which have subsequently been defined in other reports.

Under the heading "The Construction of Public Works," there is a brief discussion of the financing of these services. The point is made, once again, that necessary public works such as bridges or sewage treatment facilities had been delayed because of the difficulties of arranging an equitable distribution of cost. These problems would, of course, disappear if the

responsibility for providing these major services were transferred to some form of metropolitan authority. The Commission saw merit in centralizing fire and police protection services, services related to public welfare and public health, also the inspection of buildings. They were not convinced that garbage collection should be centralized but were of the view that garbage disposal should be. Snowplowing was seen to be substantially a local responsibility as was street cleaning and maintenance. Parks and libraries were seen to benefit from centralization, as was the assessment of properties for local tax purposes.

In summarizing the case for a metropolitan administration, the Commission considered that a larger administrative unit would be able to employ specialized personnel and equipment, and important economies of scale would be achieved. Effective co-ordination was seen to be the result of centralizing major services in a single authority and the more equitable distribution of the costs of these services was considered to be one of the advantages.

In presenting the counter argument, the Commission stated that centralization of administration removes it further from the citizens being served. Administration in a small municipality is likely to be more flexible and more responsive to the demands and complaints of citizens; people can communicate directly with the person in authority who can deal with the problem himself. In a large municipality, citizens who wished to register desires or grievances can generally only approach subordinates, or may get lost in a maze of red tape. The officials of large organizations are bound by rigid rules and these may inhibit them in dealing appropriately with unusual cases. Deviation from the rules is extremely dangerous in a large municipality because "it may open up a host of new demands, many of them undeserving."[33]

When it came time to review the choices open, the Commission rejected the continued use of individual metropolitan boards and was opposed to amalgamation into one city, even though it expressed the view that the then population of the metropolitan area, 420,000 people, would hardly create a city that would be "too big." In view of the subsequent creation of Unicity

Winnipeg, in the early 1970s it would have been interesting had the Commission developed the arguments against amalgamation in rather more detail. All the Report says is that this choice was considered, carefully weighted, and was found to be wanting.

The recommendations of the Com,mission clearly indicate that it had a high regard for the system that had been established in Metropolitan Toronto. It recommended partial amalgamation of the constituent municipalities in the metropolitan area to form eight cities. The Mayors of each of these cities would form the metropolitan council with the addition of six controllers elected from six new districts with approximately an equal number of voters in each. These controllers would form a Board of Control. In order to avoid parochialism on the part of the controllers, each district should contain part of at least two of the new cities. Although the use of a Board of Control was popular in Ontario at the time the Commission was reporting, it had not been used in Manitoba or in Western Canada.

The task of the Board of Control was to be the preparation of plans and policies for the approval of the Council and the supervision of adopted plans and policies. The Chairman was given a strong position in that he was to be both the titular and executive head of the Council and the Board of Control. In the first instance the Chairman was to be appointed by the provincial government; subsequently he was to be elected by the members of the metropolitan council from among themselves or from outside their number.

In recommending the series of amalgamations which would result in eight cities, the Commission explained that it had not attempted to create cities with equal population but had attempted to meet minimum size criteria for a viable urban community. However,the Commission did not specify how size was to be measured; population rather than areal extent or tax base can be assumed.

In the field of education, the Commission recommended the creation of a Metropolitan School Board to have control over all capital expenditures for education, to receive and distribute provincial grants for education and to

select and purchase school sites. The Report stated that it was a fundamental principle of the Commission's proposal that the resources of the metropolitan area could justifiably be used to provide essential school accommodation up to a reasonable minimum standard for the entire area. "If local boards desire to provide extra accommodation in addition, then extra expenditures would have to be provided by local levies on the ratepayers in the municipality or school area concerned."[34]

The Commission made passing reference to the existence of a Royal Commission of Education and it was the recommendations of this other commission that were considered subsequently and resulted in changes in the organization of education in Manitoba.

Towards the end of its discussion of education, the Commission noted that the Canadian education system "came to us from Britain via the New England States into Western Canada." It considered that the British system had now changed and independent elected school boards have been eliminated. Education is now one of the responsibilities of the County Council. "We in Canada, however, have slavishly followed the practice which is still in use not only in New England States but in all jurisdictions in the United States."[35] There is no follow-up to this critical comment which appears to indicate that the Commission may have seen merits in eliminating independently elected school boards but did not regard this change as politically feasible at the time.

The Commission's recommendations relative to other services contained no surprises. The division of responsibility for sewer and water service and public transportation was to remain substantially unchanged with, however, the elimination of separate boards, their responsibility being centralized in the new Metropolitan Council. As to the distribution of electrical power, the Commission was prepared to go no further than to suggest that this vexed and highly political question should be discussed further.

The local responsibilities for the airport were to be assumed by the Metropolitan Council and the responsibility for water, transportation, power, and airport facilities should be placed under the authority of a Public

Utilities Commission composed of the Chairman and six members of the Metropolitan Council. The introduction of a Public Utilities Commission which was unknown in Manitoba but quite common in Ontario is a further indication of the Commission's preference for the Ontario model and was justified, in the opinion of the Commission, on the grounds that "there should be a minimum of political interference in the operation of the self-sustaining facilities."[36] It is interesting to note that the Commission regarded the provision of public transit as a "self-sustaining" utility. They did not anticipate the need to subsidize the provision of the transit service, a need that became rapidly apparent in the early days of the metropolitan government.

The responsibilities of other special purpose bodies such as the Rivers and Streams Authority, the Harbour Commission and the Civil Defence Organization, were to become the responsibility of the Metropolitan Council, as was jurisdiction over the responsibility for hospitalization of indigent patients, the maintenance of neglected children under the Child Welfare Act, homes for the aged, and certain of the costs related to the administration of justice. The maintenance of dykes and other provisions for flood control and the control of mosquito abatement were to become metropolitan responsibilities, as were various forms of licensing.

Under the heading of miscellaneous responsibilities, there is also passing reference to the use of development and redevelopment provisions contained in the National Housing Act (NHA). The metropolitan council, in common with the local councils, should have all the powers of a municipality under this legislation. The extent to which the metropolitan government might use the powers of the NHA was to become a continuing issue later.

In addition to responsibility for certain social services already mentioned, the Commission was of the opinion that welfare should become a metropolitan responsibility but that its administration should be left to the local council - a seeming paradox. The explanation for this recommendation contained statements which appeared to be critical of the way in which welfare payments were administered at that time, and seemed to indicate that these funds should be provided by the entire metropolitan area but that their

distribution should be very much a local matter. The Commission commented that "sometimes bigness itself is the cause of inefficiency."

Further indication of the Commission's attitude to planning is given in the recommendations under the heading of "regional planning and zoning." The Commission did not appear to be aware of the problems developing in Metropolitan Toronto resulting from a lack of a clear definition of where local planning responsibility ended and where metropolitan responsibility began. The Commission recommended that the metropolitan commission be given "adequate powers to direct and control in a general way the physical development of the entire metropolitan area,"[37] (emphasis added) and went on to recommend that any local development plans and land use regulations should conform to a comprehensive plan of metropolitan development. The Commission also recommended that the Metropolitan Council's jurisdiction should extend beyond its political boundaries and cover "an outer fringe where the future land use should be predominately agricultural."[38] A Metropolitan Planning Board was to be established and in planning matters there would be right of appeal to the Manitoba Municipal Board, all of which followed the Toronto model very closely.

In the presentations to the Commission, it had been pointed out that the City of Winnipeg provided large parks and golf courses which were enjoyed by all. The Commission recommended that certain large parks, recreation areas and cultural centres should be the responsibility of the Metropolitan Council but community clubs and local cultural activities should continue to be the responsibility of the local councils.

To overcome variations in assessment and to eliminate inequities in the distribution of industrial tax revenue, the Metropolitan Council was to be given a very strong role in the question of assessment, taxation and finance. It was to be given exclusive responsibility for the assessment of taxable properties. Furthermore, there was to be a uniform mill rate for all of the industrial property in the metropolitan area "and the amount so levied and collected to be distributed among the municipalities proportionately." Income from the business tax should go to the Metropolitan Council as part of its

revenue and it should also have exclusive power over the issue of debentures for its own purposes and for the purposes of local municipalities and their boards. The Metropolitan Council would take over all the old debenture debt and also assume responsibility for all sinking funds and reserves. Again, the preference for the Toronto model is apparent.

The Commission's final recommendation was that provision be made for the review of the operations of the Metro Council after its first five years of operation, by a committee or commission set up by the provincial government.

In view of contemporary interest in participatory democracy and the role of the elected politician - the question of whether he is a delegate or a representative of his electorate - it is interesting to refer to the Commission's view on this matter. In the view of the Commission, dispensing with the referendum on major financial issues would "compel the elected officials to stand up and be counted." According to the Commission this would have a two-fold effect, "the first is that a candidate who has proven both ability and good judgement on issues will be returned by a comfortable majority while the one with poor judgement is eliminated, the second is that the former invariably deserves and receives the confidence and respect of the electorate."[39] In light of contemporary discussions of local politics, this view may sound a little naive and simplistic, as is their reference to the familiar statement by Edmond Burke.

The point has already been made that any assessment of the Report and Recommendations of the Commission can only be made fairly if it is seen against the background of attitudes, values and events that were current at the time the Report was being written. It is easy to be critical with the benefit of hindsight and although subsequent events supported the wisdom of some of the Commission's recommendations and questioned others, the Report is a remarkable document. Remarkable because of the breadth and detail of its considerations, because it served to clarify and crystalize a wide range of points of view on a very complex subject and finally because it is remarkably free from parochialism and preservations of status-quo. It is true that the Commissioners borrowed heavily from the Toronto model but it must be

remembered that at the time Metropolitan Toronto was the most dramatic and promising innovation in local government on the North American continent, perhaps in the world, and high hopes were held for its success.

The Report of the Commission was well received and drew favourable comment from both of the daily papers. Some concern was expressed about the amalgamation of some 14 municipalities into eight cities, but this came mainly from local politicians who feared that they might lose out in the competition for seats on the new city council. The lack of citizen interest in the Report is not surprising when viewed in the context of the late 1950s.

Those who were professionally or politically interested in the future of the metropolitan area, while supporting the general tenor of the recommendations were, of course, aware that they would have an opportunity to influence the actual legislation that would result from the Commission's recommendations. Generally, the Commission's strong advocacy of a form of metropolitan government came as no surprise and the reaction to the Report was "let's get on with it."

Although this review of the Report and Recommendations of the Commission has underlined a number of what are considered to be its deficiencies, the historical significance of the Report to contemporary students of local government reform cannot be overemphasized. It presents a clear and detailed picture of the opinion of experienced municipal men at that time.

Once again, applying the criteria set out in the "Introduction," the recommendations of the Commission would have increased **efficiency** by the centralization of the provision of services. The use of electoral wards, though not specified by the Commission, would have countered the loss of **responsiveness** caused by amalgamation into eight cities and would have helped to provide adequate **representation**. As the issue of **openness** was not addressed it can be assumed that there would be no change in this. The qualities of **leadership**, **flexibility** and **commitment** can only be judged on the basis of performance, but it can be said that there was nothing in the

recommendations of the Commission that would inhibit the exercise of these qualities.

The composition of the Council, the mayors of the eight cities and six directly elected controllers, would have posed a problem. It can be assumed that the majors would have given priority to city concerns while the controllers would have been influenced by their metropolitan mandate, thus providing a potential conflict situation. The lack of recognition of this problem may be explained by the almost exclusive preoccupation with the "service" role current at that time. This and the persistence of the "businesslike" tradition in Winnipeg probably provided the basis for the assumption that a group of experienced people, however selected, would be able to arrive at a consensus on questions of the provision of services.

6. THE INITIATION OF METROPOLITAN GOVERNMENT - 1960

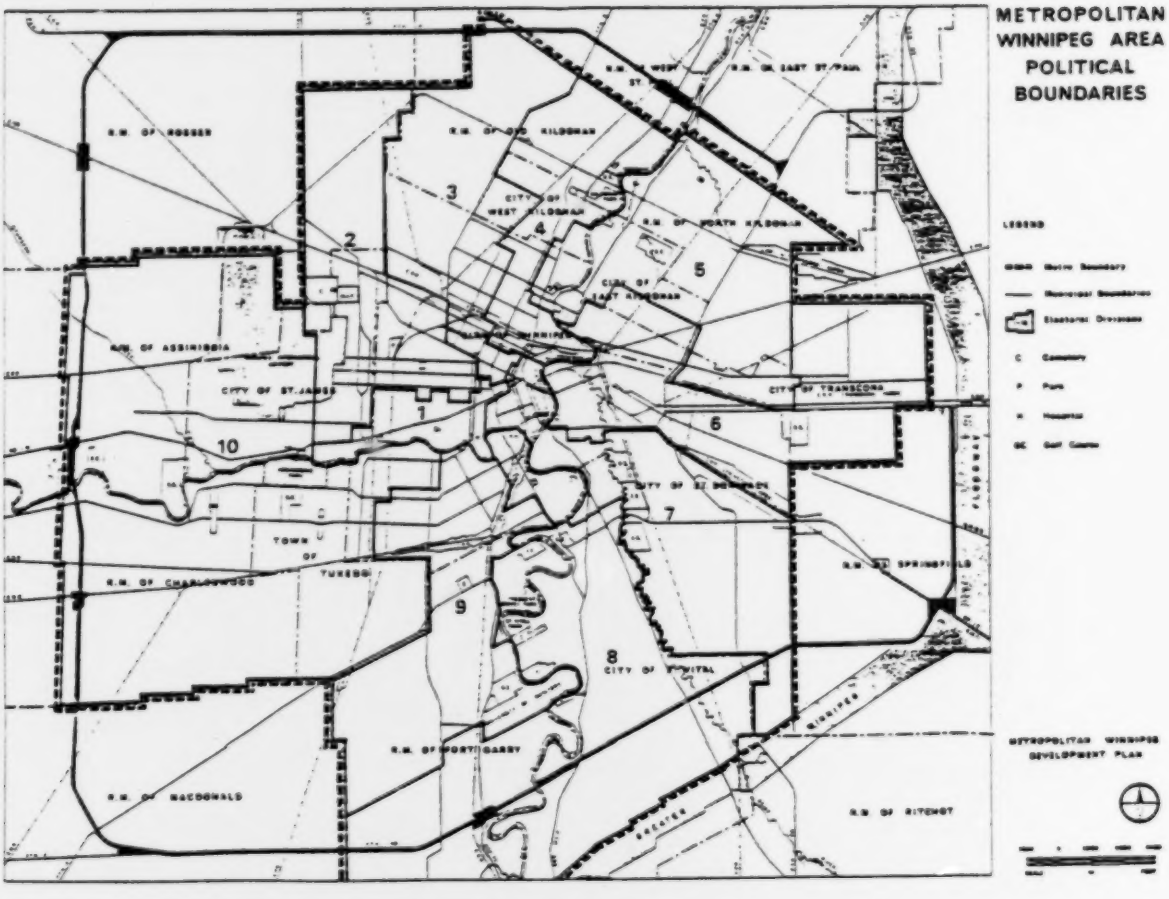
In 1958 the Progressive Conservatives under Duff Roblin[40] had defeated Douglas Campbell's Liberal regime that had been in office for many years. This change in provincial administration resulted in a change of a number of provincial policies including those related to Metropolitan Winnipeg. The predominantly cautious rural character of the administration under Campbell, typified by it's "pay as you go" government, changed, and there was a stronger urban voice in the new government. Roblin himself was an urban man and had a long association with political and business interests in Winnipeg. He was, however, a skillful politician and realized that a dramatic swing from rural to urban preoccupations would not be acceptable, particularly as rural influences were still strong in his party.

Although the reform of local government in Winnipeg had not been an issue in the election, it was a topic of particular personal interest to Roblin. He and his immediate associates in the Cabinet realized that some form of metropolitan government was necessary. They also considered that complete amalgamation would be unacceptable to both the local politicians in the Winnipeg area and to some of the members of the provincial Progressive

MAP 1

Metropolitan Winnipeg Area

Political Boundaries



Conservative party who were concerned with the implications of one large urban government representing, in terms of both population and economic base, over half of the province. They considered that an amalgamated City of Winnipeg could be a rival to the provincial government. Also there had to be a response to the recommendations of the Investigating Commission.[41]

The drafting of the legislation based partly on the Investigating Commission's report was a task in which Roblin was personally involved. He instructed Mr. William Johnson, Q.C., the Deputy Minister of Municipal Affairs to undertake this task assisted by Mr. Gerald Rutherford, a skilled legislative draftsman.

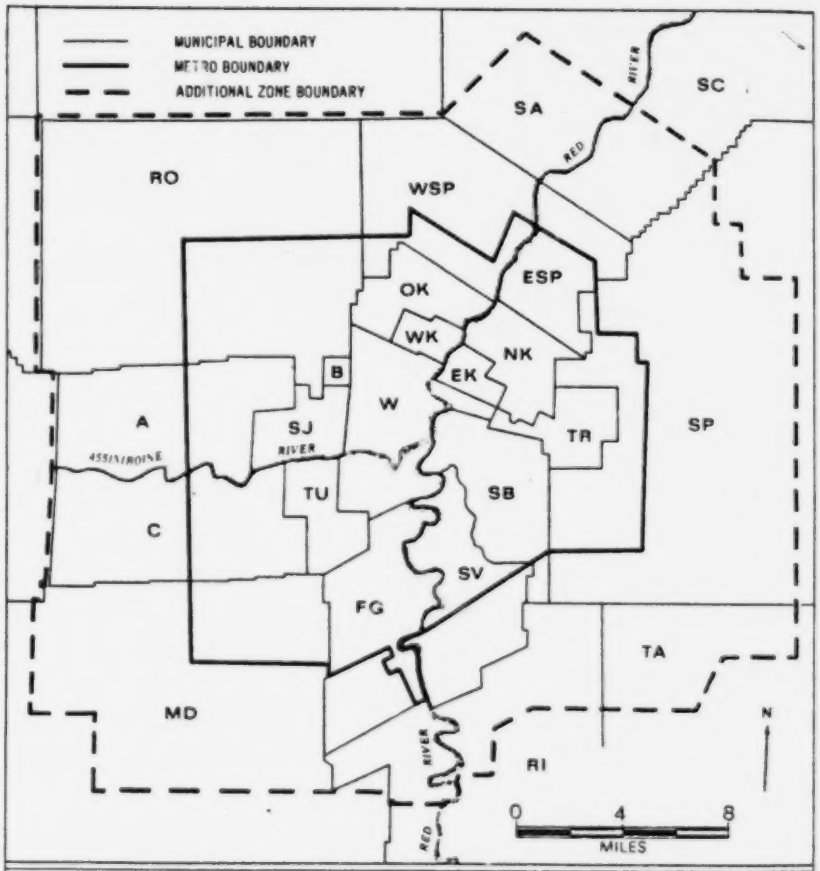
Roblin instructed Johnson to give first priority to the preparation of legislation and this task occupied a substantial part of his time in late 1959 and early 1960. Although the legislation drew on other experience, it was essentially a "home grown" product in that no "out-of-town" experts were formally consulted. In developing ideas, Johnson took advantage of his wide range of personal friendships among political and administrative figures in Metropolitan Winnipeg. The author recalls participating in some of these discussions and in assisting Eric Thrift in the preparation of a number of working papers dealing with population growth, alternative methods of development control and the division of metropolitan Winnipeg into ten electoral districts, for example. Preliminary drafts of legislation were also circulated informally for comment.

In retrospect, the preparation of the legislation represents an interesting example of the way in which major new policies were hammered out and translated into legislation in those days. There was no public consultation, in fact, the public was probably not aware that legislation was being prepared. The actual task of preparation was assigned to one senior civil servant working very closely with Premier Roblin and using what is now somewhat disparagingly referred to as the "old boy network" to obtain the advice and assistance of informed and experienced people.

MAP 2

Metropolitan Winnipeg

Municipalities and Population 1960



METROPOLITAN WINNIPEG—MUNICIPALITIES AND POPULATION—1960

IN METRO AREA			PART IN METRO AREA AND PART IN ADDITIONAL ZONE*		
B	BROOKLANDS	4288	A	ASSINIBOIA	6097
EK	EAST KILDONAN	26869	C	CHARLESWOOD	6034
NK	NORTH KILDONAN	8649	ESP	EAST ST. PAUL	1982
OK	OLD KILDONAN	1312	FG	FORT GARRY	16962
SB	ST. BONIFACE	36361	MD	MACDONALD	180
SJ	ST. JAMES	33817	RO	ROSSER	350
TR	TRANSCONA	14096	SP	SPRINGFIELD	220
TU	TUXEDO	1624	SV	ST. VITAL	26765
WK	WEST KILDONAN	19675	WSP	WEST ST. PAUL	2032
W	WINNIPEG	256733			60622
		403424		TOTAL METRO POPULATION	464046

* The additional zone also included parts of RICHOT (RI), TACHE (TA), ST. ANDREWS (SA) and ST. CLEMENTS (SC).

One very important by-product of this process was that many of those who subsequently held senior political or administrative positions in Metro had been consulted and had contributed to the preparation of the legislation. In this way they had become at least partially committed to the principles and policies incorporated in the legislation. Although commitment was not total in every case, it was sufficiently general to cause those subsequently involved to put out substantial efforts to make the new system to which they had contributed work - particularly in the early days of Metro.

While accepting the idea of a two-tier system, Roblin and Johnson did not accept the recommendations of the Commission in their entirety. As subsequent detailed discussion will show, there were a number of departures, one of the most significant being that education was not considered at all. Some changes in the administration of education were already in process, based on the findings of another Commission, and it can be assumed that it was considered unwise to make any further changes at that time.

Metro was not to have overall control of capital expenditures for the entire metropolitan area as was the case in Metropolitan Toronto. Also, the legislation provided for direct election of ten metropolitan councillors from new pie-shaped electoral districts which were required by legislation to contain at least parts of two municipalities. Furthermore, in order to maintain some sort of centre-city to suburban balance, not more than five of the electoral districts were to contain a majority of voters from the City of Winnipeg.

The first Chairman was to be appointed by the Lieutenant-Governor in Council and subsequent Chairmen were to be elected by the Metropolitan Council. One of the councillors or a former Chairman could be elected. Again, the Toronto model was followed and, in view of the controversy over the method of selection of the Mayor of Unicity Winnipeg a decade later, it is interesting to note that there was little or no discussion of the method of selecting the Metro Chairman. The legislation also contained a significant administrative innovation. The concept of a city manager or chief executive officer was introduced in the form of an Executive Director who was to be the

senior salaried administrative officer and who would be responsible for both the co-ordination of policy ideas and their implementation once they had been adopted by the Council.

Some measure of the acceptance of the need for metropolitan government and an indication of skill with which Roblin and Johnson had developed their legislation can be seen when it is noted that Bill 62, An Act to Establish the Metropolitan Corporation of Greater Winnipeg and to Provide for the Exercise by the Corporation of Certain Powers and Authority, was adopted in six weeks by an almost unanimous vote of the Manitoba Legislature. In the process of considering the Bill, the Legislature received very little formal or informal response from the public or from interest groups and, in light of the political turbulence which was subsequently generated by the introduction of metropolitan government, it is interesting to observe that this stormy child had a very painless birth.

In introducing the Bill to the Legislature, Premier Duff Roblin described it in the following terms, "the principle on which this Bill rests consists of rather two simple thoughts: first of all, that we should develop a central planning authority for this metropolitan area that would be charged with the responsibility of providing a unified development plan for this large urban area; and secondly, that we should also provide for central control of essential services to the public within this same urban area."[42]

Johnson recalls Duff Roblin's insistence that the legislation should provide for a "business-like" form of government and this influenced the selection of a structure which incorporated an Executive Director whose role would be very much like that of the general manager of a private corporation reporting to a board of directors, the elected Council.[43] The original legislation made it quite clear that the Council was to have no day to day administrative role, this being left to the Executive Director and the Directors of the various functional divisions of the metropolitan staff. As has been mentioned, the desire for a "business-like" government probably influenced the selection of the first Chairman, Richard H.G. Bonnycastle, a businessman with a considerable local and national reputation but who had no

political experience. Partly to compensate for this lack of political experience, Bonnycastle, with the approval of Duff Roblin, appointed Elswood Bole as the first Executive Director. Mr. Bole had considerable local political experience both as an elected and as an appointed official, having established a reputation as a politically skillful and forceful administrator while Mayor of the suburban municipality of St. Vital. In principle and in practice the Bonnycastle/Bole combination represented a substantial assembly of abilities and experience, and access to a wide network of influential people in both government and in business.

It is not an exaggeration to say that the political community of Metropolitan Winnipeg greeted the passing of the legislation with a sigh of relief. At last the decade of discussion and debate was over and some positive action had been taken. The newspapers greeted the passage of the legislation as heralding in the millennium and Premier Roblin and his government turned to other urgent tasks.

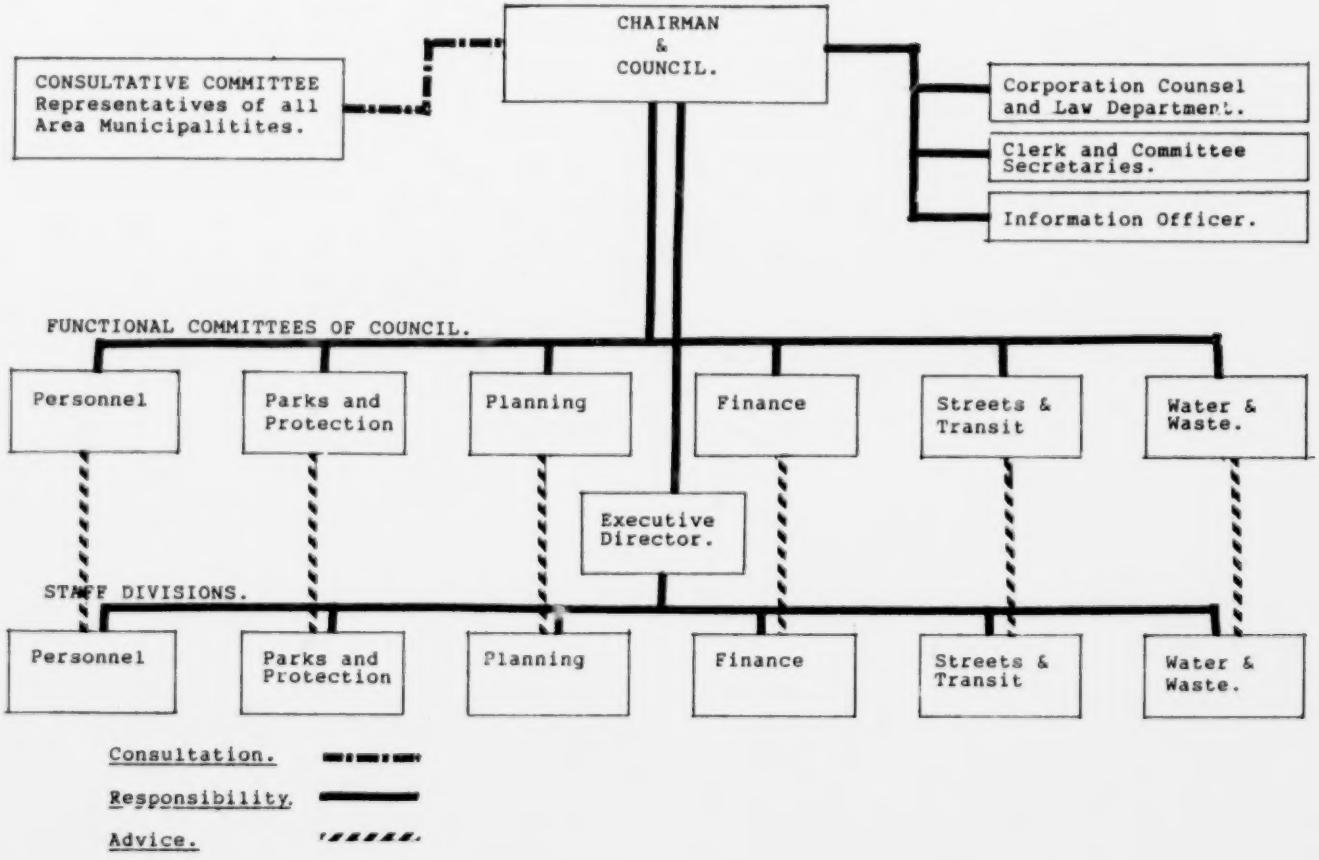
In the early Fall of 1960, in addition to making some provincial senior administrative appointments, Bonnycastle borrowed some senior staff from the City of Winnipeg to help with the initial formative work. Subsequently, Mayor Steven Juba and certain other members of the Council of the City of Winnipeg complained that Metro was luring away their senior staff with offers of "exorbitant" salaries. The question of the proposed salaries for the senior Metro staff was the first in a long series of issues raised by the City of Winnipeg.

The initial organizational work was well done, and by the time the first Metro Council was elected in November 1960, Bonnycastle and Bole were able to recommend a detailed administrative structure with the names of those who could fill the senior positions.

Figure 1 shows the administrative structure that was put in place based on the broad outlines indicated in the legislation. It should be noted that although the legislation did not require it, Council decided to use the familiar "council-committee" system rather than taking advantage of the

FIGURE 1

Organization of the Metropolitan Corporation of Greater Winnipeg



legislation which provided for a simpler administrative structure and a clear distinction between policy-making by Council and policy-administration by the senior staff officers, co-ordinated by the Executive Director.

The legislation provided that the term of office for the first Council would be four years in order to give it time to get organized and then develop a record of performance for which it could be held accountable at the first re-election. Following the first term, subsequent Councils would hold office for the customary two years.

In addition to Finance, Personnel and Planning Divisions, whose functions are obvious, the Water and Waste Division took over the combined responsibilities and staff of the former Greater Winnipeg Water and Sanitary Districts. The Streets and Transit Division assumed the functions of the Greater Winnipeg Transit Commission and the added responsibility for metropolitan streets. Parks and Protection was a combination of several unrelated functions; parks, civil defence, and flood control. This dissimilar collection of responsibilities which formed a division of comparable size with the others was also influenced by the fact that the first Director, Andrew Currie, had prior experience in both recreation and civil defence. "Protection" did not include police and fire, as these were to remain the responsibility of the area municipalities.

The legislation provided that the Metro Council could assume its responsibilities in stages. When it was ready to assume a responsibility it would ask the provincial government to publish the necessary Order-in-Council. During 1961 the assumption of responsibilities proceeded in an orderly manner. Although some advocated the completion of the Development Plan before assuming responsibility for land-use control, it was decided to take over the entire responsibility for planning on 1 April 1961. As this responsibility carried with it a substantial administrative task in connection with the issue of zoning, building, plumbing and electrical permits and related inspections, this necessitated the transfer of professional, technical and clerical staff from the municipalities. The majority of the inspections group, including all of the senior staff, came from the City of Winnipeg. Administratively, the

transfer caused only minor problems; politically there was some talk of "loss of local autonomy" and disagreements over specific development approval decisions persisted. It is significant to note, however, that no one advocated to the subsequent Review Commission that this responsibility should be returned to the area municipalities.

A discussion of the successes and failures of the government which was led by the Bonnycastle/Bole duo will be given subsequently, however, at this point, it is relevant to mention the position taken by the City of Winnipeg, and more particularly, its Mayor, Steven Juba, throughout the whole period that preceded the Metro Winnipeg Act and during the life of Metro.

Winnipeg's consistent opposition to any new form of government which did not afford the City of Winnipeg and its Mayor a central and powerful position was consistently maintained throughout the late 1950s and, in retrospect, it may seem surprising that two experienced people such as Roblin and Johnson should not have been able to anticipate the violent conflict that quickly developed as soon as the metropolitan government was formed. However, Johnson was later of the opinion that the metropolitan government moved too rapidly in taking over its responsibilities. He believed that much of the conflict could have been eliminated if the metropolitan government had assumed only those responsibilities that were relatively uncontroversial and had waited until substantial public and political demands had developed before taking over additional services. Johnson's point of view presupposes that this demand would have developed and, in the view of the author at least, this is questionable.

One example will serve to illustrate the kind of political issue that was used to generate Metro municipal conflict. It also demonstrates the skill of Metro's chief opponent, Mayor Juba, in selecting issues. On 7 May 1961, Mayor Juba announced a public meeting at City Hall for the purpose of giving citizens an opportunity to air their complaints about the metropolitan government.

For some time it had been known that parts of the structure of the old City Hall were deteriorating, particularly the gallery that encircled the Council Chamber. As Metro had recently assumed responsibility for the administration of building by-laws which included the question of safety of public buildings, Mayor Juba's administrative assistant asked for confirmation that the Council Chamber and its gallery would be safe to use for the meeting. After discussions by technical experts, including the Engineer for the City of Winnipeg, who had previously been responsible for safety of public buildings and was familiar with the conditions of the City Hall, it was agreed that no more than 75 persons should be admitted to the gallery. It was also suggested that Mayor Juba's meeting might be transferred to a city-owned theatre which was across the street from City Hall. Juba refused to transfer his meeting, saying that this would cause confusion, and Metro was held responsible for some 300 people being turned away from this meeting because there was no room to accommodate them.

Political opposition to metropolitan government was not exclusive to the City of Winnipeg but extended throughout the majority of metropolitan municipalities. In view of this, Mayor Juba attempted to create an association of majors and reeves to act as the formal means through which criticism of metropolitan government could be co-ordinated and channeled. He was not completely successful in this endeavour as a number of suburban mayors, notably Joseph Guay of St. Boniface,[44] though frequently critical of Metro, were not prepared to take part in a sustained and organized attack directed by Mayor Juba. Mayor Guay, for example, was realistic in his attitude and realized that his city could gain through co-operation with Metro. Though basically co-operative, Guay could be dramatically critical of Metro at times when he considered this necessary, either because of the nature of the issue or when he felt that, in his own words, "I have to keep you guys on your toes!"

In retrospect, the persistence of the political conflict was predictable, as it was based on the transfer of power. Those who lose power are sure that the recipients are exercising it with a lack of expertise and understanding, both metropolitan systems show evidence of this.

A comparison of the two Canadian metro systems can be based on identifying the forum within which the conflict takes place. As the Council of Metro Toronto is a form of federation, metro-municipal conflict occurs in the Council and its committees, a forum that allows internal political alliances and attitudes to come into play, often with little public discussion in the press and other media except when a municipal politician deliberately decides to "go public" and talk to the media about the issue. In contrast, the Winnipeg Metro Council did not provide this kind of internal forum and all of the metro-municipal conflicts took place externally with almost daily reporting by the media of the current stage of the conflict. Advocates of open government may see merit in the Winnipeg system, while advocates of consensus politics would demonstrate that only in the Toronto situation is this possible.

Experience qualifies this simple distinction. The record of Metro Winnipeg shows a number of examples where consensus was achieved through informal political and staff liaison, particularly when there was a mutual desire to get a job done rather than to create political capital out of the situation. Obviously a willingness to reach consensus is essential. Where this does not exist, issues become polarized and conflict results.

Conflict was further heightened by the style of operation of the Metro government and its senior officers. Two factors determined this style. The first was the structure of Metro which introduced to Winnipeg the manager or executive director. The first executive director, Elswood Bole, saw his role quite clearly as the co-ordinator and, at times, the mediator in inter-departmental differences. His strong personality, reinforced by his close working relationship with the Chairman, Richard Bonnycastle, allowed him to establish his position as "first among equal" insofar as the senior staff were concerned. He instituted regular Friday morning meetings of heads of Divisions - a term deliberately chosen to underline the difference between Metro and a conventional municipal government which had Departments. At these meetings overall policies and strategies were agreed upon and each Director kept his colleagues apprised of the activities of his Division, particularly those which would need inter-divisional co-operation. The parallels with a

private corporation are obvious - further evidence of the persistence of the "businesslike" tradition, which required that a strong, efficient and harmonious image would be projected.

The second factor which determined style was that the political attacks on Metro started in the early weeks of its life. In the face of these attacks, the senior staff and the Council became "brothers in adversity" and needed to present a united front to survive. Insofar as Council was concerned, its four-year initial term allowed it to both fight its political battles and to achieve a high level of performance, particularly in the hard servicing function. A shorter term would have added the need to keep one eye on the next election and is likely to have created an untenable position for the Council.

A detailed evaluation of Metro's performance will be given later. However, at this point it is appropriate to comment that hard servicing needs were met; roads and bridges were built, sewer and water systems were expanded to meet the demands of growth, the efficiency of the public transit was improved, assessment practices were made uniform and a metropolitan development plan was prepared and approved by the responsible provincial minister. Metro's social servicing responsibilities were limited to the provision of metropolitan parks - and these were substantially improved with new buildings and additional services including the encouragement of the winter use of these major parks. An awareness of social issues was developed through liaison with the Community Welfare Planning Council of Greater Winnipeg. The Planning Director was a member of the Council and staff assistance to the Council for a number of research projects including a Social Service Audit was provided. This liaison provided the planning staff with some understanding of the social needs of the metropolitan area and contributed to the effectiveness of physical planning and development control - Metro's primary function.

Another useful connection was made with a number of school boards in the metropolitan area; there was no Metro School Board as in Toronto. Metro's research staff provided assistance to the school boards in forecasting school

needs. This liaison assisted in the physical planning of school sites in developing suburban areas.

A factor that had much to do with the subsequent stormy life of Metro was the ease with which the legislation was passed and generally accepted as a solution to the problems of the metropolitan area. When the solution did not prove to be a panacea, many became disenchanted or blamed the Metro administration for misapplying the concept. Almost the entire discussion over the past decade had been conducted by identifying problems and proposing solutions - a mode that encouraged and reinforced the view that it was possible to devise a solution for all time. The introduction of any new system brings with it a new series of problems; when the municipal politicians raised new or hypothetical issues, the general public became convinced that something had gone seriously wrong with the implementation of what had been presented as a method of eliminating problems. Another significant factor was the attitude of the provincial government to Metro. Once the Act had been passed, the Province refused to be involved in the politics that ensued. Although it is not unusual for any provincial government to maintain a separation from inter-municipal political issues, the tacit support by the Ontario government for Metro Toronto in its early days was a factor in resolving metro-municipal issues. Similar support from the Government of Manitoba could have slowed down, if not largely eliminated, the acceleration of the metro-municipal conflict in Winnipeg. There is no question in the author's mind that provincial support was anticipated during the early days of Metro; when it did not materialize the implementation strategy had to be revised.

It is hard to accept that the critical comments which were made during the late 1960s referred to the same government system that was praised so highly at the beginning of the decade.

Rather than being presented as a solution to problems, it would have been wiser to present the new metropolitan government as a substantial step forward in the evolution of local government, an attitude that would have clearly

suggested that subsequent steps were to follow. As it was, too many people accepted metropolitan government as the answer for all time.

When the Metropolitan Winnipeg Act is seen in an historical context, it is a highlight in a continuing evolutionary process. Every year throughout the life of Metro, changes were made both in the legislation and in administrative methods. Some legislative changes were in response to political pressures but others were remedies to administrative and procedural problems that could not have been foreseen by those who prepared the original legislation.

A number of the amendments illustrate, for example, an evolutionary movement away from the "city manager" form of administration to something closer to the traditional council-committee form. This change, which demonstrates the persistence of familiar systems and the resistance to some forms of innovation - in spite of commitment to metropolitan government in principal - can be seen as a series of steps starting shortly after the inauguration of the first Council with the adoption of a hybrid system which added familiar functional committees to the manager system and culminated in 1969 with the removal of the mandatory provision for appointing an Executive Director and other Directors with legislative responsibility for the day to day operation and management for the affairs of Metro.

The first Metro Council, contrary to accusations of inexperience leveled subsequently by the metropolitan municipalities, contained a predominance of men with experience on municipal councils or school boards including some men who gained their experience in the City of Winnipeg. Of the ten councillors, only Moffat and Willis had not been elected to municipal office previously. The Metro Council also contained a group of three men, Blumberg, Coulter, and Cherniack, who were members of the NDP. The remainder of the Council had no overt party designation but the majority of them had indirect connection with either the Liberal or Progressive Conservative parties in the province. The political affiliation of the three NDP members was openly acknowledged and the political affiliations of others were not concealed. However, the first Metro Council did not divide on party lines. Its dominant characteristic, particularly in the early days, was a strong sense of unity in face of the

attacks from the councils of the metropolitan municipalities. This sense of unity was also very apparent in the senior administrative echelons of Metro. A close working relationship developed between the Directors of the various functional divisions and the chairmen and members of the particular committees of Council to whom the individual directors reported. There were, of course, differences and arguments within the metropolitan structure - all was not sweetness and light. However, unity and strength of purpose was characteristic of both the elected and appointed officials of the first metropolitan government.

When reviewing the Metro years it should be kept in mind that there was a clear difference between the lines of the "insiders" and the "outsiders." To the outsider, Metro presented an image of a closely-knit group of senior administrative officers co-ordinated by the Chairman and the Executive Director and working with Council with very little apparent friction; a very different kind of local government - at best highly efficient and at worst, arrogant. In a positive sense, this unity was principally due to Bonnycastle's leadership, ably supported by Bole; and in a negative sense it was due to the need for solidarity to withstand continued external attacks.

To the insiders, Metro had been given a job to do - the servicing of metropolitan needs. It attacked this job with enthusiasm and skill, assuming that its reputation would be built on performance and that it would be given an opportunity to demonstrate its value. Again, an attitude based entirely on concentration on the "service" role. When it became apparent that Metro's reputation would be judged primarily on the way in which it discharged its "political" role, Metro was sadly lacking in both strategy and tactics.

The intensity and persistence of the Metro-Municipal conflict was due in part to the personalities of the individuals involved, and to the desire to maximize the political opportunities offered by some issues; it was also inherent in the structure that was provided. Unlike Metropolitan Toronto, the Metropolitan Council in Winnipeg was not composed of representatives from the member municipalities but consisted of ten representatives directly elected from ten electoral divisions which covered the whole of the Metropolitan area.

Very early on it became apparent that the members of the Metro Council would take a "metropolitan" approach to their task and did not consider themselves the representatives of any particular group of municipalities. Though this point of view was highly desirable - perhaps essential - in a Metro councillor, it brought him into direct conflict at times with the local councillors who gave understandable priority to the local aspects of issues. In Metro Toronto where these two attitudes were combined in one person who was both a Metro and a local councillor, these issues could be resolved within the Metro council and its committees through both formal and informal discussion. In the Winnipeg case the structure precluded this method of resolution of issues and the alternative was confrontation between the two Councils concerned. This was not to suggest that all issues were resolved by confrontation but rather that confrontation could be easily generated if public dramatization of an issue was seen to be a political advantage.

The wisdom of the early take-over of all of the planning responsibilities has been questioned by some knowledgeable observers, including W.J. Johnson. Part of the reason for the early take-over was that it was anticipated that there would be initial "teething troubles" and that it would be best to get these problems over with sooner rather than later. It was also considered that, as the issuing of permits was the final step in the development control process, a strong planning presence required control of this critical step. Furthermore it was thought that the preparation of the Development Plan - which was to be given high priority - could best be done if those involved in the day-to-day administration of development control could bring their influence to bear in a very direct way. From the beginning the plan-makers and the plan-implementors were encouraged to interact both formally and informally.

It has also been suggested that it would have been wiser to devote all planning resources to the preparation of the Development Plan and that the assumption of the full range of planning responsibilities should have waited until the Plan had been adopted so that it could serve as the basis for the administrative decisions. The pros and cons of this decision can be argued but, in support of my recommendation to the Metro Council, I was, at the time,

firmly of the opinion that unless full planning responsibility was quickly assumed, the growing political opposition to Metro would soon make this assumption difficult, if not impossible. Subsequent experience reinforced this view.

Legislative deficiencies have been mentioned. These deficiencies were, for the most part, due to assumptions and under-estimations that proved to be invalid. For example, the absence of opposition to the legislation supported the assumption that the member municipalities would take a positive attitude to Metro and would co-operate in making it work. No effective provision was made for resolving metro-municipal differences. The strength and persistence of municipal opposition was not anticipated, nor was the speed with which it developed.

Nor did the draftsmen of the legislation foresee the problems arising from a situation where, although in law the Metropolitan Council had "sole and exclusive jurisdiction" over planning matters, the municipalities were in fact, still involved. As the provision of local services to new areas of development was a municipal responsibility, they considered, with justification, that they had a legitimate right to have some say in the location, character and the timing of new development. Though not anticipated in the legislation, this municipal concern was acknowledged in administrative procedures. Questions related to new development were referred to the municipality concerned for comment prior to the Metro Council making a decision on them. In a substantial number of cases, this arrangement worked quite satisfactorily. However, from time to time there were instances where Metro disagreed with the views of the municipal council concerned and political conflict resulted. It is debatable whether or not these conflicts would have been substantially avoided if the legislation had established quite clearly the municipal right to be consulted and involved in development decisions.

Ontario's experience with a two-tier regional government where jurisdiction for planning is divided between a regional or metropolitan council and the municipal councils, indicates that even where municipal involvement in

planning is clearly established, problems still arise. Both the Winnipeg experience and the experience in Ontario clearly indicate that all the time the responsibility for planning and particularly the control of development, is divided, there may be conflict.

In retrospect, the transfer of responsibilities went remarkably smoothly and this observation can be made not only for planning but for assessment, major parks, the streets and transit. As for the responsibilities for sewage treatment and water supply, it was "business as usual" but with a new Board of Directors."

In spite of the political atmosphere, the successful transfer of responsibilities was due in no small measure to the close working relationships between the Metro staff and the staff of the cities and municipalities in the area. The overwhelming majority of the Metro staff had been working in the metropolitan area either for metropolitan agencies or for municipalities and there was an effective informal horizontal network of contacts and friendships. This situation persisted over the years of the life of the metropolitan government.

To some observers it may seem a paradox that at the same time that bitter political battles were being fought out in public, the day-to-day administration of the affairs of the metropolitan area were proceeding smoothly on a basis of Metro-municipal co-operation. From time to time senior staff were called on to provide the ammunition for the politicians to fire, but for the majority of decisions, those which were uncontroversial or which had no potential as political weapons, the two-tier system dealt with these satisfactorily even though in many instances, there was no clear line of demarkation between the metropolitan and municipality responsibility In some cases, over time, working precedents were established to resolve a class of problems, in other cases ad hoc decisions were made to resolve a particular question under consideration.

A number of students of bureaucracies have commented on the significance of what may be called horizontal and informal linkages which develop and are

superimposed upon the formally established and predominantly vertical flows of information and decision-making. The decade of metropolitan government in Winnipeg is an excellent illustration of these two characteristics of administrative structure and also indicates the essential nature of the informal, horizontal connections.

7. METROPOLITAN WINNIPEG REVIEW COMMISSION - 1962

The legislation had contained provisions for a review of the metropolitan government after five years. In response to continued political pressure, the provincial government decided to advance this review and in October of 1962 appointed Lorne R. Cumming, Q.C., the Deputy Minister of Municipal Affairs for Ontario and the author of the original Metropolitan Toronto Legislation, to head a Review Commission. G. Sidney Halter, a Winnipeg lawyer (probably better known then as the Commissioner for Football in Canada) and R.B. (Bob) Russell, a prominent labour leader, were the other members. Russell was unable to serve due to ill health and Russell Robbins, another local labour leader, was appointed in his place.

The Review Commission received 60 briefs; 24 from municipalities, 12 from non-political organizations and 24 from individuals. In addition it heard verbal presentations from 17 municipalities, 10 from non-political organizations and 14 from individuals. The majority of the briefs supported the need for a metropolitan form of government to administer inter-municipal services. Generally, the municipal briefs argued for indirect election while the briefs from organizations and individuals favoured the existing direct method of electing Metro councillors. A substantial number of briefs were well reasoned and thoughtful - the dramatic exception being the brief from the City of Winnipeg.

Early in the hearings Chairman Cumming made it clear that he expected the presentations to be based on fact. He was not prepared to listen to unsubstantiated criticism, nor did he see the hearings as a forum for political rhetoric. This position caused a major clash between the Chairman

and Mayor Juba who subsequently accused the Chairman of being "the rudest man I have ever met" and that "the Commission was 'a farce, a cover-up and a smokescreen'...What do you expect from him? This man is pro-Metro - he's the man who installed Metro in Toronto."[45]

The strategy of the Metro Council was in contrast to that of the City of Winnipeg. Prior to the hearings of the Commission it was decided that the Metro brief would be restrained in tone, would not be defensive and would be based on fact. The Winnipeg Free Press commented "The brief points no fingers; it makes no protestations. It is a straightforward, dispassionate, and readily documented account of the work that Metro has done to date."

Metro politicians and staff attended all of the hearings and noted the comments contained in the briefs being presented. Rebuttal evidence was immediately prepared and filed with the Commission, usually on the day following the particular presentation. In retrospect, this demonstration of administrative efficiency can be questioned. At the time it annoyed many of those presenting the particular briefs which were rebutted and who felt that it represented undue pressure on the Commission. However, it should be remembered that, at the time, the Metro administration felt that it was fighting for its life. It saw the Commission as an impartial, non-political tribunal that would judge on the basis of demonstrated performance.

One limitation of the work of the Commission should be noted. As another Commission had been established to review the fiscal arrangements between the Province and its municipalities, Chairman Cumming ruled that any discussion of the Metro-provincial grants was outside the terms of reference of his Commission. This was unfortunate as many of the issues raised by the municipalities were related to the size of the Metro levy which was directly effected by the level of provincial grants. Any discussion of local government reform which does not include consideration of fiscal planning is unrealistic.

To the contemporary observer, the briefs submitted to the Commission show concern for both the political and service roles of the Metro government but

are lacking in any real discussion of open and responsive local government. At the time of the Commission hearings, Spring 1963, concerns for open government and the need for effective two-way communication between the public and local government had not been articulated to the extent that happened later in that decade.

The Report of the Commission, released in the Spring of 1964, substantially confirmed the existing arrangements for two-tier government - direct election to Metro council was to continue. In an interview given to the Winnipeg Tribune shortly after the Report was issued, Chairman Cumming explained his view of the difference between Toronto where he recommended indirect election, and Winnipeg where he did not, by pointing out that Ontario had a two-tier county system with indirect election to County Council for many years whereas Manitoba had no counties. He also commented that the larger number of municipal units in the Metro Winnipeg area would create an unwieldy council. It is interesting to speculate on the extent to which the Cumming-Juba conflict influenced this recommendation. Although Cumming had ignored Juba's outbursts, it was clear from other comments that he made during the period of the hearings, that he viewed the Mayor of Winnipeg's views of Metro as essentially destructive and that any change which would have put Juba in a position of power on Metro council would be severely damaging to the two-tier Metro concept which Cumming believed in.[46]

In the original Metro Winnipeg Act, the government had been given authority for all planning in the Metro area and in an "additional zone" extending beyond the outer boundary of Metro. Unlike Toronto, responsibility for planning was not divided between Metro and the area municipalities. The Winnipeg system created conflict as the area municipalities objected to the loss of the power to plan for their own areas. This problem was further intensified by the fact that the responsibility for servicing was divided. Metro provided the trunk services and treatment facilities for sewage and for the bulk supply of water. The area municipalities remained responsible for local sewer and water services. As the development of new suburban areas depended in large part on the ability to extend these services the area municipalities were in the position, in theory at least, of having to extend

local services into areas they had not approved for development. Metro dealt with this servicing problem by establishing an administrative policy that no new development would be approved before it had been considered by the council of the area municipality affected and a recommendation from that council had been received and considered. Although this policy tended to minimize the servicing issue it did not deal with the political issue - the loss of power. The situation was further heightened by the fact that the Act gave Metro final authority in planning matters. This was in keeping with Roblin's wish to create a strong planning authority.

The Cumming Commission dealt with this problem by recommending that Metro's planning decisions should be subject to "appeal" to the Manitoba Municipal Board - following the practice adopted in Ontario. Although the term appeal was and still is used when describing the Municipal Boards' function, it should be noted that this is not a true appeal in the legal sense. In a true appeal the appellate group review the evidence heard in the first instance, listen to argument based on that evidence and make a decision - no new evidence is heard. In planning appeals, new evidence is presented to the appellate group so the hearing becomes, in fact a trial de novo.

The significance of this fine distinction is that the appeal body makes its decision based on quite different evidence and opinion from that heard by the Council making the initial decision. In practice, appeal to a Municipal Board gives an elected council the opportunity to avoid long-term planning issues and make its decision based on short-term political considerations, knowing that a more long-term approach is likely to be taken by the Municipal Board, which is not subject to political pressure. In practice, when the Manitoba government accepted Cumming's recommendation and incorporated planning appeals to the Manitoba Municipal Board, the Metro Council was not unhappy to be relieved of final responsibility of this onerous and politically volatile function. In retrospect, it can be said that the quality of Metro's planning decisions suffered.

Although a number of the briefs submitted to the Cumming Commission advocated a division of planning authority similar to that in Toronto, there

was little direct evidence to support an avenue of appeal from metro/municipal planning decisions. It was unfortunate that Cumming was so strongly wedded to the idea of an appointed provincial board to sit in judgement on the planning decisions of elected local councils - a system that can be criticized as anti-democratic. At a more pragmatic level, and viewed at a distance of some twenty years, the planning decisions made by Metro Council during the early "pre-appeal" years were carefully considered after the opportunity for the expression of views by interested citizens and detailed discussion of staff recommendations. Even allowing for this author's bias, it is fair to say that these early planning decisions were of much the same quality as those made by the Manitoba Municipal Board after the appeal process had been instituted.

Had the system of appeal not been instituted, we would now have a body of experience against which to test the practice which has become almost universal across Canada - some form of appointed board to hear appeals from all or some municipal planning decisions. But the strongest argument for final decision at the metro or regional level is that it clarifies **responsibility** and **accountability** for planning decisions.

The adoption of Cumming's recommendations by the provincial government later in 1964 did little to abate the political conflict that lasted until the end of Metro government in 1971.

Although Mayor Juba appeared to be the leader of the municipal opposition to Metro, he was unable to form an alliance of area municipalities as his leadership was unacceptable to the majority of the municipal politicians. In spite of his skill at political infighting and his almost unerring instinct for picking the issues that were suitable for developing into highly politicized situations, he was regarded as a political "loner" and showed no real interest in developing an organized consensus of opposition. As far as he was concerned the only answer to the situation was amalgamation into one city with himself as Mayor - an event that did not occur until later with the creation of Unicity.

8. THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOUNDARIES COMMISSION REPORT - 1970

In 1966 a Local Government Boundaries Commission had been established. Its first task was to deal with revisions to the boundaries of school districts. Later in 1969 it turned its attention to boundaries in the Metro Winnipeg area. Although the Commission's terms of reference appeared to be restricted to the boundaries of metro municipalities, the Commission appreciated that boundaries are but one facet of municipal organization and could not be dealt with in isolation. Accordingly, it asked for and obtained a redefinition of its mandate insofar as the metropolitan area was concerned. Its revised terms of reference "left no doubt in the mind of each member of the Commission that the intent of the Legislature was for the Commission to examine not only boundaries, but also the total structure of local government in Metropolitan Winnipeg."[47]

The first, and only document produced by the Commission dealing with Metro Winnipeg was the Provisional Plan already cited. It was intended as a discussion document and, in keeping with contemporary practice, set out a number of alternatives and discussed these, particularly as they would affect the costs of governing. It also attempted to prepare a formula for evaluating costs over time which reflected a number of factors such as economies of scale, cost of upgrading staff salaries and cost of improving services to ensure an adequate level of environmental quality. This brave and innovative attempt to introduce a "quantitative" method of evaluation of alternative forms of government met with considerable scorn from the traditionalists who claimed they could not understand it. It is truer to comment that they would not take the time and effort to try to understand it. More thoughtful critics questioned the assumptions upon which the evaluation was founded. A further, and more basic criticism, was the preoccupation with costs to the exclusion of the many other factors relevant to any discussion of local government reform. Informal conversations with some members of the Commission and its staff indicated that they were aware of this basic criticism but felt that the important question of costs should be dealt with first in the Provisional Plan. The Provisional Plan also included "Guidelines and Criteria" to be applied in the process of assessing available alternatives.

These "Guidelines and Criteria" are worth discussion as they serve to show that the Commission was mindful of factors other than cost. They also give an indication of the way in which the Commission had approached its task.

The Commission stated that "its goal [was] the development of a form of government that has the **capability of adapting itself** to the complex demands of an urban technological society while retaining the participatory element inherent in local government"[48] (emphasis added). In order to do this, the form of government "must be structured so as to be able to identify and adjust quickly to social, political and technological change." It should also provide "a means of effective communication between citizens and their elected representatives at all levels of government;" and the units of local government "must be politically and economically viable." "Established institutions such as schools and community clubs, around, and on which people centre their activities, should be disturbed as little as possible. These institutions assist group action, define realistic limits and delineate neighbourhood boundaries."[49] The guidelines also pointed out that certain services were area-wide and costs should be borne on an area-wide basis.

The Commission also acknowledged that "privately financed investment will be an important factor in the continuing expansion of the tax base;" and emphasized that "continuing growth will depend on an inflow of non-residential capital" which requires promotion and co-ordination on an area-wide basis. Failure to do this, resulting in "unco-ordinated competition for investment among municipalities can lead to uneconomic development."

The Commission is to be commended for emphasizing the significance of **private** investment - an obvious fact which is almost consistently ignored by most of the reports on Canadian local government reform. A reading of other reports gives a clear impression that the authors believed that the promotion, management and financing of economic growth is entirely a governmental responsibility - or perhaps they believe that the need for public-private co-ordinated and co-operative action is so obvious as to need no mention. Whatever the reason, most of the systems developed by others perpetuate the arms-length relationship between the public and private sectors of the

economy. Co-operation with the land development industry is seen as akin to prostitution by doctrinaire planners and municipal managers. We have yet to see a model of local government that acknowledges that government, the public and the private sector are the three basic components of a system.

After considering how the alternatives met the guidelines it had established, the Commission selected the alternative of a nine city, two-tier structure with both direct and indirect election to the regional council. Ten councillors would be directly elected from constituencies formed from the new cities. Each city would have one councillor per 50,000 population including its mayor, and the "additional zone" - the area immediately outside the regional boundary - would have two representatives chosen from among the mayors and reeves of the municipalities which were included, in whole or in part, in the additional zone. Municipal and city boundaries were to be adjusted so that no municipal unit would be partly in and partly out of the region, a situation which had been created when the original Metro Winnipeg boundaries had been drawn and had resulted in an awkward situation where some municipalities had, in the graphic words of one Metro councillor, "their feet sticking out from under the Metro blanket!" In keeping with usual practice, the Chairman of the Regional Council would be selected by the Council.

The planning function was to be divided between the regional and municipal councils, following the Ontario model, with the regional planning staff available to service the municipalities on a consulting basis. The Ontario model was also followed for the division of other functions.

The Commission's recommendations concluded with a strong condemnation of the practice of holding a referendum on any proposed changes as had been advocated by some, including the Mayor of Winnipeg. It concluded its argument against referenda by citing the familiar words of Edmond Burke on the difference between a delegate and a representative - "your representative owes you not his industry alone, but his judgement; and he betrays, instead of serving you, if he sacrifices it to your opinion."

An unexpected change in provincial government prevented any serious discussion of the Commission's recommendations but its attempt to develop a contemporary method of dealing with the problem of local government reform makes it worthy of note.

9. THE ROYAL COMMISSION ON LOCAL GOVERNMENT AND FINANCE - 1963

Although not directly related to the topic of metropolitan government, mention should be made of a Commission which was established by the Manitoba government in 1963 - The Royal Commission on Local Government and Finance, under the Chairmanship of the Hon. Roland Michener. In the literature of local government reform this can be described as the "forgotten Commission." This is unfortunate as its recommendations on a form of regional organization for the province, though never implemented, are interesting - particularly when they are contrasted with what happened in Ontario.

In addition to redefining municipal responsibilities, the Michener Commission proposed the decentralization of provincial services to regions in the following terms:

> ...it is proposed that the Province be divided into eleven definite administrative regions. Each region will comprise the entire area of a number of contiguous rural municipalities as now or hereafter constituted and the cities, towns and villages within them and be designated to enable the people of the region to receive in co-ordinated form and from a designated centre, all the services of the various departments which the provincial government considers responsive to such decentralization....50

The Michener Commission went on to recommend Regional Councils with members from the municipalities comprising the regions and defined the role of the Regional Councils as providing "a forum for developing voluntary plans for inter-municipal works and projects and machinery for the settlement of disagreements with respect to such plans by the [Manitoba] Municipal Board." A further innovation would be the appointment of "a Regional Administrative Officer directly responsible to the Premier or Executive Council, rather than to the head of a Department...with the duty of co-ordinating the regional

administration of all related Provincial services, of serving without vote on the Regional Council and providing liaison between the Provincial administration and the Regional Council."[51]

The proposal was opposed by MLA's who saw the Regional Administrative Officer as providing a route for the municipalities to approach the Premier which would by-pass them and reduce their role as advocate for the municipalities in their ridings. It was also opposed by some Ministers and their senior staffs who did not take kindly to the idea of a "super civil servant" co-ordinating their activities in the proposed regions - a diminution of their ability to deal directly with municipalities concerning the provision of those provincial services for which they were responsible. It should be noted that, although the Roblin Government had moved away from the ultra-conservative "pay-as-you-go" policies of the preceding Liberal government under Douglas Campbell, an ultra-conservative attitude persisted, particularly among the older Deputy Ministers who had grown up under the Liberal regime. Once again an interesting and innovative idea foundered on the now familiar shoal of prevailing political culture.

The recommendations were motivated by a desire to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the provision of provincial services and to provide a mechanism for inter-municipal co-operation. The failure to deal with the realities of the political role and to acknowledge that, in addition to providing for inter-municipal co-operation, the Regional Council should also deal with issues which affected the region as a whole, is representative of the thinking of that time; although the need to deal with region-wide issues had been acknowledged by the creation of Metro Winnipeg, this was regarded as a unique situation.[52]

The problem of co-ordinating all of the provincial policies and programs affecting regions is not unique to Manitoba. In recent years there have been unsuccessful attempts to get the provincial ministries in Ontario to adopt uniform administrative regions as the first essential step to regional co-ordination. The problem is not based on bureaucratic inertia but reflects the differing criteria that Ministries use for defining their regions - criteria

that may make sense insofar as the concerns and interests of a particular ministry are concerned, but which are not universal.

The administrative and perhaps symbolic advantages of a unified provincial presence in a region are obvious - it is suggested that both effectiveness and accessibility would be substantially improved. However, the trade-off would be that individual provincial departments or ministries would have to accept a compromise in the definition of regions.

It is unfortunate that the Michener Commission's proposal for decentralization of the administration of provincial services was not acted upon. It would have provided useful experience with an alternative system of provincial regionalization.

10. EVALUATION OF METRO WINNIPEG

In applying the criteria for effective local government to Metro Winnipeg it is imperative to recall the two basic purposes of the Metropolitan reform which were defined when the legislation was introduced into the provincial legislature. They were the centralization of area wide, or metropolitan, services and the provision of a strong central planning agency for the area as a whole. The centralization of services was successful; sewer and water supply was extended to those areas where it was needed both for existing development which was deficient in these services, and to provide for future urban expansion.

The success of the water and sewer service was due, in large part, to the prior existence of the Greater Winnipeg Sewer and Water Districts which, in co-operation with the municipalities, provided these services, so a division of servicing responsibility was familiar and accepted. Metro was able to extend services without having the problems of sharing of capital cost for facilities already in place, as Metro had assumed responsibility for the capital debt for the facilities formerly owned by the Districts. There were some conflicts with municipalities and land developers about sequence and

extent of new areas to be services, as Metro used the ability to control service extension as a means of regulating where development was to take place.

The public transit system was improved and extended partly through the application of improved corporate planning for this service and partly by the acceptance of the principle that transit was a service, the cost of which should be supported by a subsidy paid from Metro's general levy. By placing administrative responsibility for both metropolitan streets and the transit system under one Director, planning for both of these services was co-ordinated. The Metro street system was expanded, additional bridges over the two rivers were constructed and inter-municipal variations in street widths and design standards were eliminated.

Assessment of real property was standardized and inequities which had resulted in differences in municipal assessment were eliminated. The extent of metropolitan parks and golf courses was doubled during the life of Metro. The facilities provided in the Metro parks were improved and winter use of the parks was encouraged by the provision of opportunities for skating and tobogganing. Responsibility for "public protection," principally flood control, mosquito abatement and emergency measures planning, was centralized. The City of Winnipeg continued to provide specialized police and fire services to municipalities under contract. An area-wide system of emergency phone service, one of the first in North America, which had been initiated by the police department of the City of Winnipeg continued and was extended.

The second purpose of the reform, creation of a strong central planning agency was not as successful as it might have been, due to the intense political conflict that was generated by certain planning issues. The efficiency of development control, including the administration of building, plumbing and electrical permits was improved partly by the adoption of a uniform metropolitan Zoning By-law and by close liaison between the staff responsible for zoning and building control and the issuing of permits.

A number of planning proposals, particularly those dealing with the central area, ran into stiff opposition which prevented or seriously hindered their implementation. Urban renewal proposals are a case in point; the Metro Act gave the central agency the responsibility for **planning** for urban renewal but not the power of **implementation**. Conflict between Metro and the City of Winnipeg concerning where and when urban renewal should take place, and the nature of the re-use of affected land, or of existing buildings to be incorporated in a renewal scheme, caused problems. Attempts by Metro to obtain changes in legislation to acknowledge the need for both planning and implementation of renewal projects to be the responsibility of one agency were successfully opposed by the City. This opposition was entirely political as the need to revitalize the central area was obvious. Accepting the fact that the future of the central area was critical to the economic and social well-being of the entire area, it followed that the capital cost of improving this area should also be a charge against the area as whole. This serves to illustrate the problems which arise when the logic of management conflicts with politics.

When the criteria described in the "Introduction" are applied, it can be said that the **efficiency** criterion was satisfied for those services which were the responsibility of Metro with the exception of planning and development control. In this latter case, administrative efficiency was improved but the acknowledgement of Metro's central position in planning was never fully realized for reasons which have already been discussed.

Responsiveness to metropolitan needs was satisfied in a limited sense - the ability of Metro to respond to all of these needs was limited by both extent of responsibilities and by political conflict. The confusion that persisted over the division of responsibilities also limited the satisfaction of this criterion. In spite of efforts to publicize where responsibility rested, the public continued to have difficulty in deciding who was responsible for what. Towards the end of the life of Metro the public, particularly those who had frequent contact with local government in the course of their business - land developers and those whose activities were licenced by local government, for example - did become familiar with the division of responsibilities, but the

general public continued to feel that there was "too much local government" and that the division of certain responsibilities was arbitrary and inefficient.

The need for **open government** and good communication between the government and the citizens did not become an issue until the later years of Metro. And even then it did not become a major issue, probably due to the conservatism of the local political culture. Certain interest groups advocated greater openness and local governments generally responded, albeit rather reluctantly, to this need. The series of events connected with the discussion and adoption of the Metropolitan Development Plan did enhance openness insofar as this particular function was concerned. In addition to displays in downtown stores and an exhibition in Metro's offices which provided the public with an opportunity to enquire about the Plan, a series of mandatory public hearings were well attended and publicized. In addition to providing information about the Plan, the public also took this opportunity to ask about the other functions of Metro and the way in which responsibilities were divided. Unfortunately staff and budget restrictions prevented the setting up of a permanent central information office and the benefits gained by the program of publicizing and explaining the Plan were lost.

Direct election provided an excellent level of **representation** as has already been mentioned. The mandate of the Metro councillors and aldermen were quite clear. Questions can be raised about the size of the Metro wards and whether they were too large to maximize representation. Subsequent reports and proposals dealt with the question of the ratio of elected representatives to electors and the optimum size of an electoral ward or constituency is open to debate. However, it can be said that representation never became a major issue during the life of Metro.

The division of responsibilities and the political conflict that typified the Metro period makes an assessment of **leadership** difficult. However, Bonnycastle and his successor, Jack Willis, both provided strong leadership, although of different styles. Although the Bonneycastle-Bole combination

compensated for Bonneycastle's lack of political experience, his annoyance with the "politic-ing" of Juba and others sometimes showed.

Willis had been active in the local and provincial Conservative party and was, therefore, more politically attuned than Bonnycastle. But both men were skillful in working towards acceptable compromises on issues. Juba's rejection of any compromise on issues that were of concern to him created problems. However, acceptable compromises were negotiated with other municipal councils.

Willingness to work towards acceptable compromise shows an acceptance of the need for **flexibility**. An objective, longer-range view of the Metro years shows that many of the improvements in the quality of life were the result of flexibility on the part of both Metro and the area municipalities. As for **commitment**, this quality was certainly present in the Metro council and its administration, particularly in the early years. As has been indicated, a comparable level of commitment to the Metro idea was not universally present among the area municipalities initially, though it began to develop later on. It is interesting to speculate what might have happened had the proposals of the Boundaries Commission - a strengthening of the Metro concept - been implemented rather than Unicity. Certainly, the early response to Unicity appeared to favour the continuation of a two-tier system, which by then, was familiar and more widely accepted.

11. THE PRELUDE TO UNICITY

During the period that the Progressive Conservative government had been in power in Manitoba, the Liberal party had wasted away. The election of 1969 was, then, a battle between the Progressive Conservative and New Democratic parties. During this period both parties had become increasingly urban-oriented and the future of Metro Winnipeg had been debated at length.

Partial or total amalgamation had been discussed by the area municipalities and in the local press. In June 1968, Metro Council by resolution strongly

backed total amalgamation. In light of what happened subsequently it is interesting to recall that, in an interview given to the Winnipeg Free Press in June 1969, Edward Schreyer, the leader of the NDP, advocated a new regional government with "wider ranging and stronger powers than Metro....[It] would be supported by about the same number of municipal councils as at present, but with their powers more culturally and socially oriented than financially oriented...members of the [regional] council would be elected in the same fashion as they are now." He added that the new regional council would not necessarily be the first step to total amalgamation; "regional government is the logical step to take at this time. Total amalgamation is the kind of drastic change that cannot be done well."[53]

Much to the surprise of everyone, including the NDP itself, the provincial election resulted in a victory for the NDP. Saul Cherniack recalls discussing the early election results with Sidney Green, both of whom had been Metro Councillors, and speculating on what was to happen with Metro Winnipeg. At this early morning conversation, the seeds of Unicity were sown.[54]

12. UNICITY WINNIPEG - 1971

The new NDP government moved with dispatch to tackle the problem of Metro Winnipeg. A group of consultants headed by Meyer Brownstone, a political scientist with an acknowledged reputation as an expert in local government, working closely with a small Committee of Cabinet headed by Saul Cherniack, produced a White Paper which was released in December 1970. The stated purpose of this document was "To stimulate, and to provide a focus for, public discussion on the question of urban reform in the Greater Winnipeg area prior to legislation to be introduced at the next session of the Manitoba Legislature.[55]

The White Paper is remarkable in that it is the first attempt in Canada, and perhaps elsewhere, to respond to the changes in attitudes, needs and expectations that had emerged as a result of the turbulent 1960s. It was an approach to local government reform which acknowledged the changing

relationship between the citizens and their municipal government, a relationship that required open government, responsive to the needs of the citizens and which would provide an avenue through which the citizens could easily and effectively bring influence to bear on those public decisions which affected them most directly. At the same time, efficiencies in the provision of services were to be attained by the application of contemporary technology, while a uniform level of service was to be available throughout the metropolitan area. In practice, any uniformity of service inevitably involves a levelling-up rather than a levelling-down. This was also the period when the general level of affluence had increased the citizens' expectations of improvement and extension of both the hard and soft services which were to be provided by local government.

In the words of the White Paper, "It is the view of this Government that all major **services** should be unified, but that the local government itself- **the political processes of local government** - must at the same time be decentralized and, through a proposed system of Community Committees, be brought closer to the people. We are convinced that these must be parallel processes; and that one cannot succeed without the other."[56]

The unification of local services under one local government - complete amalgamation - was to be accompanied by a new system of wards which would result in a directly elected council with 48 members, each representing some 10-12,000 people; a substantially larger council than had traditionally been used. The wards were to be grouped together in "Communities" each including at least three wards. The actual legislation which followed the White Paper created 13 communities, three were formed from the City of Winnipeg and the remaining ten followed closely the boundaries of the former suburban municipalities.[57]

The elected councillors would have a dual role, as members of the Unicity Council and as members of the Community Committee for the community from which they were elected. Certain administrative responsibilities would be delegated to the Community Committees and they would also prepare and adopt a budget for community services. Subsequently, the community budgets would be reviewed by

the Unicity Council and incorporated into the overall budget for the entire city. In addition to responsibility for parks and community centres, the Community Committees would have certain responsibilities for local planning and zoning issues. As will be described later, the Community Committees were to have close formal relationships with the citizens of the community through Resident's Advisory Groups.

In the White Paper, the Mayor was to be elected by Council from among its membership so it was implicit that he would be the leader of the majority group in the large Council; the remainder would form an "opposition." The introduction of a form of party politics in the Council was a departure from the Canadian, and Winnipeg tradition. This tradition held that there was no place for party politics at the municipal level, in spite of the existence of a covert form of party politics for many years. In pre-Metro days there had been a Civic Election Committee (CEC) and subsequently a Metro Election Committee (MEC) which claimed not to be a political party but an organization to encourage suitable people to run for local office. However, on only one occasion during the life of the MEC did it endorse a candidate with an NDP affiliation. All of its other candidates were Liberals or Progressive Conservatives. A number of non-MEC candidates who were not members of the NDP did run for office as Independents. This situation produced many of the characteristics of partisan elections in that candidates could be grouped according to affiliation and a "machine" assisted them to get elected. However, a lack of stated party platform and further, a lack of party discipline once the members had been elected resulted in a situation which had all of the disadvantages of a party system, with none of the advantages. Once Unicity was created, the MEC transformed itself into the Independent Civic Election Committee (ICEC).

The White Paper advocated an entirely new structure. There was to be an Executive Committee consisting of the Mayor (ex officio) and the three Chairmen of Standing Committees for Planning and Development, Works and Operations and Finance, and three or more Councillors elected by Council. The introduction of an Executive Committee was an innovation in Winnipeg and, bearing in mind the implied "parliamentary" nature of the Council, can be

equated to a Cabinet, with the three Chairmen of Standing Committees being approximately equivalent to Ministers and the others as Ministers without Portfolio. In addition there was to be a Board of Commissioners, a system in use in Alberta and British Columbia, where a group of senior salaried officials, under the chairmanship of a Chief Commissioner could, in the context of Winnipeg, be equated to Deputy Ministers. The Mayor would also be a member (ex officio) of the Board of Commissioners, further strengthening his administrative position. Although Metro Winnipeg had introduced the idea of an Executive Director - the equivalent of a Chief Commissioner - a committee or board of senior salaried officials had not formally been incorporated into the Metro structure.

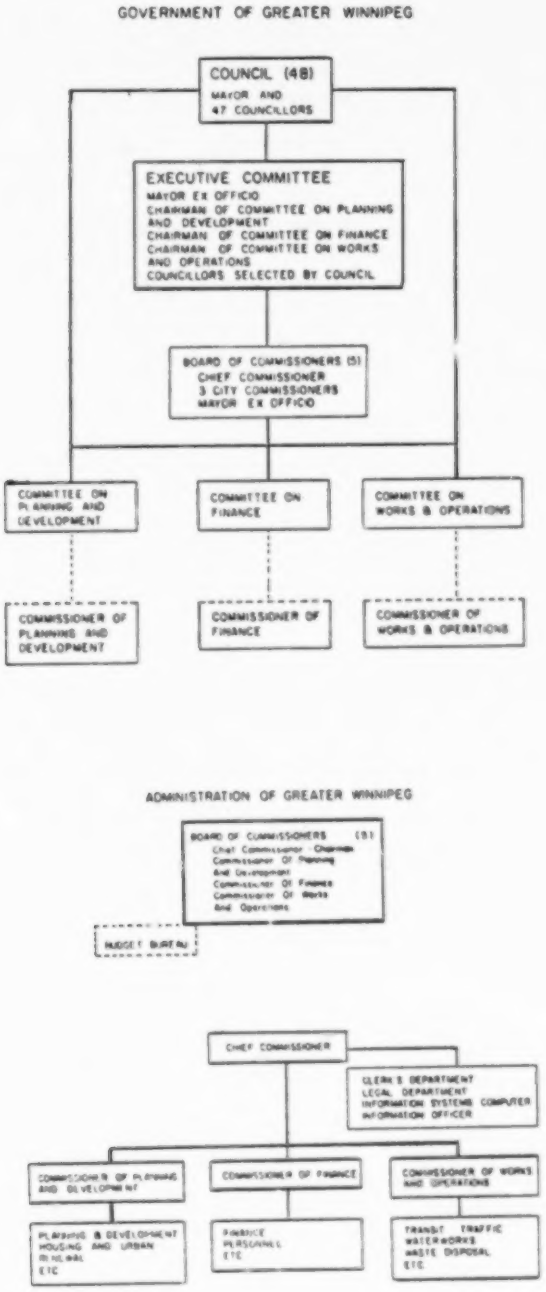
The role of the Executive Committee was to be the focus of policy making and to provide a link between Council and the administration. The Board of Commissioners was to make recommendations "on all matters concerning the carrying out of the executive and administrative government of the City." These responsibilities also included preparing and presenting the recommendations on policy to the Executive Committee. Figure 2 shows the structure of the government and administration for Unicity and is taken directly from the White Paper.

A further innovation in the White Paper was a discussion of the relationships between the proposed Unicity and the provincial government. As Unicity was an unusual form of municipality the provincial government proposed to set up a new Department of Urban Affairs to deal exclusively with it. The existing Department of Municipal Affairs would continue to be responsible for all of the other municipal units in the province. The new Department of Urban Affairs would also have a role to play in relationships with the federal government on urban (Unicity) affairs.

The final section of the White Paper set out a timetable for the implementation of the Unicity proposal, with the first election of Council to be in the Fall of 1971. Public meetings were held throughout the metropolitan area at which Saul Cherniack, the minister responsible, and other cabinet colleagues appeared, presented and discussed the proposal.

FIGURE 2

Structure of the Government of Unicity



Source: White paper.Government of Manitoba December 1970

Public reaction to the White Paper was mixed. Both Jack Willis, the Chairman of Metro, and Mayor Juba of Winnipeg endorsed the proposals while the majority of members of the area municipal councils expressed concern about loss of contact with the people through the creation of a **bureaucratic monster**, an indication that the proposals for decentralizing the political process were not understood. Later, as the proposals became more clearly understood, at least by those who took the time to study them, concern was expressed about the effectiveness of the Community Committees which would have no direct legislative or budgetary powers. Cherniack responded by saying that if the Community Committees fail to function as envisaged they will be scrapped and a conventional total amalgamation will result - "this is still better than what we have today. We can't guarantee success of the Community Committees....that aspect of the plan can't be legislated."[58]

Early in March 1971, the last of the public meetings, all of which had been well attended, was held. Concern had been expressed about the cost of the change but the provincial government said that it was impossible to predict. There was little opposition in the City of Winnipeg, the most serious opposition coming from the suburban municipalities. The possibility of a referendum on Unicity was suggested but rejected. Ironically, after a decade of conflict, there was considerable pro-Metro reaction and a call for increased powers for Metro. It should be recalled that the Boundaries Commission's report had been released in 1970 and advocated a continuation of the two-level system with a differently constituted council.

On April 28th, the Unicity Bill was introduced in the provincial legislature and referred to Committee. As there had been accusations of "gerrymandering" in the designation of the proposed boundaries of the wards, this question had been referred to an independent Commission for study with the result that the legislation finally established 50 wards.

During the Committee stage of the Bill, Major Juba was able to negotiate a change that was to have a major impact. He was able to persuade the Province to agree that the Mayor of Unicity should be elected at large and not by the Unicity council from among its members. This change would provide the Mayor

with a power base quite independent of Council and destroyed the possibility of using party discipline to make the large council function as was originally intended. Juba's widespread popularity ensured his election as the first Mayor of Unicity and, as subsequent events showed, allowed him to continue his personal style of politics which was to pursue those objectives he wished by encouraging conflict in Council and in the administration. His central role as a member of the Board of Commissioners and the Executive Committee allowed him to control the programs and policies which came forward to Council for consideration. His failure to provide any political leadership was primarily the cause of lack of progress that typified the early years of Unicity. His position of power was not successfully challenged by any individual or group in Council.

One further event is of interest. Originally the NDP had decided to run in the Unicity election as a party supported by the provincial NDP organization. A weekend caucus was held and Arthur Coulter, a Metro councillor, was elected as Chairman of the urban caucus. Later the provincial party reversed its position and decided that the NDP would not run as a party. Individuals could declare their NDP affiliation, and some 39 candidates did, but they were not assisted by the party organization, nor were they committed to the program that had been endorsed by the urban caucus.

The ICEC endorsed 48 candidates and was successful in 37 instances. Throughout the campaign the ICEC had denied that it was a political party, however, immediately following the election it behaved in a typical political manner by deciding in caucus that it would use its majority on Council to ensure that its members held 28 of the 29 power positions, as deputy mayor, and members of the Executive and Standing Committees.

The legislation, in dealing with the responsibilities of the Community Committees, made it mandatory for them to "develop and implement techniques to maintain the closest possible communication between the City and the residents of the community, and shall carry out and ensure that those residents are given full opportunity to represent their views on policies, programs, budgets and delivery of services....shall develop and implement techniques to provide

the residents of the community with information...."[50] The Community Committees were to meet regularly once a month, to facilitate resident involvement in budgeting, to report progress at quarterly meetings and to meet once a year with all of the residents of the community at which time a Resident Advisory Group (RAG) was to be selected.

The legislation is the first attempt in North America and perhaps elsewhere to **legislate** for resident participation in local government, an attempt in line with prevailing attitudes of open government and citizen involvement - an attitude that was not always shared, however, by many of the political and administrative traditionalists who formed the first Unicity Council and its administration. Nor did all of the residents eagerly accept the opportunity offered. In some communities where there were real issues, initial participation was substantial; for example in the former City of St. Boniface where the protection of francophone culture was an issue, 350 residents attended the first consultative meeting called by the Community Committee and 146 residents volunteered to serve on the RAG and its committees. Participation was also high in the inner city communities where the housing and social service provisions for high needs groups were real issues. Philip Wichern, whose paper has already been cited, was the Chairman of one of the inner city RAGs and his comments are revealing. In contrast, in the secure and stable suburban communities where there were no real issues, participation was poor.

The lack of political leadership and organization in the Council became apparent early on and persisted for reasons that have already been mentioned. In addition, the unfamiliarity of the new system and lack of commitment to it reinforced the ineffectiveness of Council as a governing body with responsibilities for policy and programs. In the early years the programs and policies that were pursued were carry-overs from the previous system and persisted because of momentum already developed - they continued in spite of, rather than because of, the new system.

One exception can be noted. The new Council tended to divide, based on the persistance of the central city-suburbs rivalry. Ad hoc coalitions of

representatives from former suburban areas ensured that their needs were met. One senior administrative officer who was interviewed in the course of this study observed that new swimming pools, community centres and paved sidewalks sprang up in the suburbs while the maintenance of existing facilities in the central area of the city was allowed to deteriorate.

In fairness, it should be noted that the Unicity presented politicians, administrators and the public with a system that had no resemblance to what was familiar and time was necessary to become familiar with this new system and perhaps to modify it to make it more workable in the political and social context of Winnipeg. Nor was Winnipeg society comfortable with the changes that had occurred generally as a result of the turbulent 1960s and had influenced the authors of Unicity. Furthermore, unlike the Metro reform, Unicity was not "home-grown" but the work of a new provincial administration advised by a group who were, in the main, "outside" consultants.[60] As the provincial administration wished to take a new look at how metropolitan Winnipeg should be governed, the use of outside experts who, as a group, were substantially free from the influence of local political culture, may be justified. However, a commitment to making Unicity work did not develop in the ranks of the senior administrative officers until several years after the reform had been enacted and after a number of the first senior officers had retired, taking with them their strong preference for the Metro system.

Juba's retirement and, after a short interim period, the succession of William Norrie as Mayor (an entirely different style of leader, and who used his connection with the ICEC majority on Council to provide political leadership) saw the beginning of a serious attempt to make Unicity work more effectively than it had done in the earlier days. However, ICEC's non-party status meant that, as Norrie could not be certain that he could count on the support of all of the ICEC members on Council, party discipline was lacking.

13. THE COMMITTEE OF REVIEW - CITY OF WINNIPEG ACT - 1976

The legislation establishing Unicity required that a review was to be conducted during the first five years. In September of 1975 a Review Committee was appointed by Order-in-Council. The Chairman was Peter Taraska, who had served both as a Winnipeg Alderman and as a Metro Councillor and was then the Judge of the Citizenship Court in Winnipeg. The members were Earl Levin, former Director of Planning for Metro and subsequently a planning consultant in private practice, and Professor Alan O'Brien, a man with extensive experience in municipal government both as an academic and as Mayor of the City of Halifax. The Report of this Committee which was published in October 1976 is noteworthy both for its contents and for the clarity of the style in which it was written.

This latter characteristic was due mainly to the skill of the authors of the original draft, but also to the editorial assistance of the Secretary to the Committee, Ellen Gallagher, and experienced journalist who had also acted as Cherniack's Executive Assistant in the preparation of the White Paper on Unicity, another document which also reflected her ability to present complex ideas in a clear and understandable way.

The first chapter of the Report dealt with the traditions of urban government in Canada and is a useful review of the state of the art. While supporting the view that municipal government is significant because it is closest to the people and is said to be most accessible and responsive, the Report commented that there has been very little reform legislation concerned with strengthening these two essential characteristics.

> One of these neglected qualities is accountability. Municipal government may be closer to the people, it may be more accessible, it may even be more responsive than both provincial or federal governments, but it is not as accountable: the important matter of who is to be held accountable for the decisions, policies and actions of the municipal governments is generally obscure.61

The Report went on to comment that in provincial and federal government the party in power is clearly accountable but, because most municipal councillors are elected as independent individuals

> usually simply on the strength of their personal appeal and rarely on the basis of any civic policy or platform, it is uncommon for the electorate to know how a particular candidate may vote on a given civic issue....In the public mind there is rarely much differentiation made between those who voted "yea" and those who voted "nay," the council as a whole is seen as being responsible for any given decision.62

Although this provides a "coarse measure of accountability it has a number of serious disadvantages." For example, a councillor who voted against a particular decision, shares council's responsibility for the decision. Furthermore, because the public cannot easily identify those who are responsible for the decision, it cannot hold them, and only them, accountable. More important, in the view of the Committee

> and most damaging to the quality of local government, is the fact that, because those who should be held accountable remain obscure, the public cannot, without extraordinary effort, either reward or censure the voting records of councillors and, therefore, cannot encourage the formulation of consistent, coherent and desirable civic policies.63

Because of this, "the entire function of municipal policy-making is arbitrary, confused, misunderstood and only vestigially developed."

The Committee recommended that the **parliamentary** form which was implicit in the White Paper and was thwarted by the election of the Mayor at large should be made **explicit**. In addition to reinstating the original intention of the Mayor as the leader of the majority group in Council, it was recommended that those who did not support the Mayor form an **opposition** led by a **Chief Critic** who they would elect from within their number. Although the continuation of a three-year term for Council was recommended, the office of Mayor and Chief Critic should be elected annually. To further the parliamentary analogy, Council would also elect a Chairman who would act as a **Speaker**.

The Committee was also critical of the amount of administrative detail spelled out in the Act. The rigidity of legislated procedures had added substantially to the complexity of carrying out the business of government. This is a dilemma that the authors of new legislation face, particularly when

an entirely new system is being put in place. There is a tendency to spell out procedural steps in some detail to ensure that the new system works as the authors intended. Experience with new legislation frequently indicates more effective ways in which the objectives of the legislation can be attained, but these modifications can only be achieved by amendment to the legislation - a time-consuming and cumbersome way of improving an administrative process. The alternative is to incorporate only the principles of the new system in legislation and leave procedures to be established either by provincial regulation or by a municipal procedure by-law, or perhaps a combination of both. Regulations or by-laws can be more easily changed, and this may be seen by some to be a disadvantage. However, experience with the City of Winnipeg Act illustrated, in the view of the Committee, the problems of putting too much administrative detail in the legislation.

The Committee also commented on the relationships between Unicity and the Province, both in the field of finance and in policy-making. The well known difficulty of an inelastic basis for levying municipal taxation, the real property assessment, was mentioned and the idea of revenue sharing rather than specific ad hoc provincial grants was recommended as a principle. The Committee also endorsed a number of principles which the City of Winnipeg had agreed with the Province earlier in 1972. Certain of these principles are worthy of note, namely:

> as a general rule any political body which is engaged in spending money should also be responsible for raising the required revenues through taxation, jurisdiction over and financial responsibility for programs and services should be clarified, and it is preferable that a taxing authority has some flexibility in choosing the nature of taxation that it can resort to."64

This flexibility could be provided by Winnipeg's residents paying a higher rate of provincial income tax or sales tax, as an alternative, or in addition to the real property tax.

In the policy field, the Committee was of the opinion that Unicity should become more autonomous and that provincial overseeing should be minimized, including the elimination of appeals to the Manitoba Municipal Board on planning issues and the Board's supervision of capital borrowing. This latter

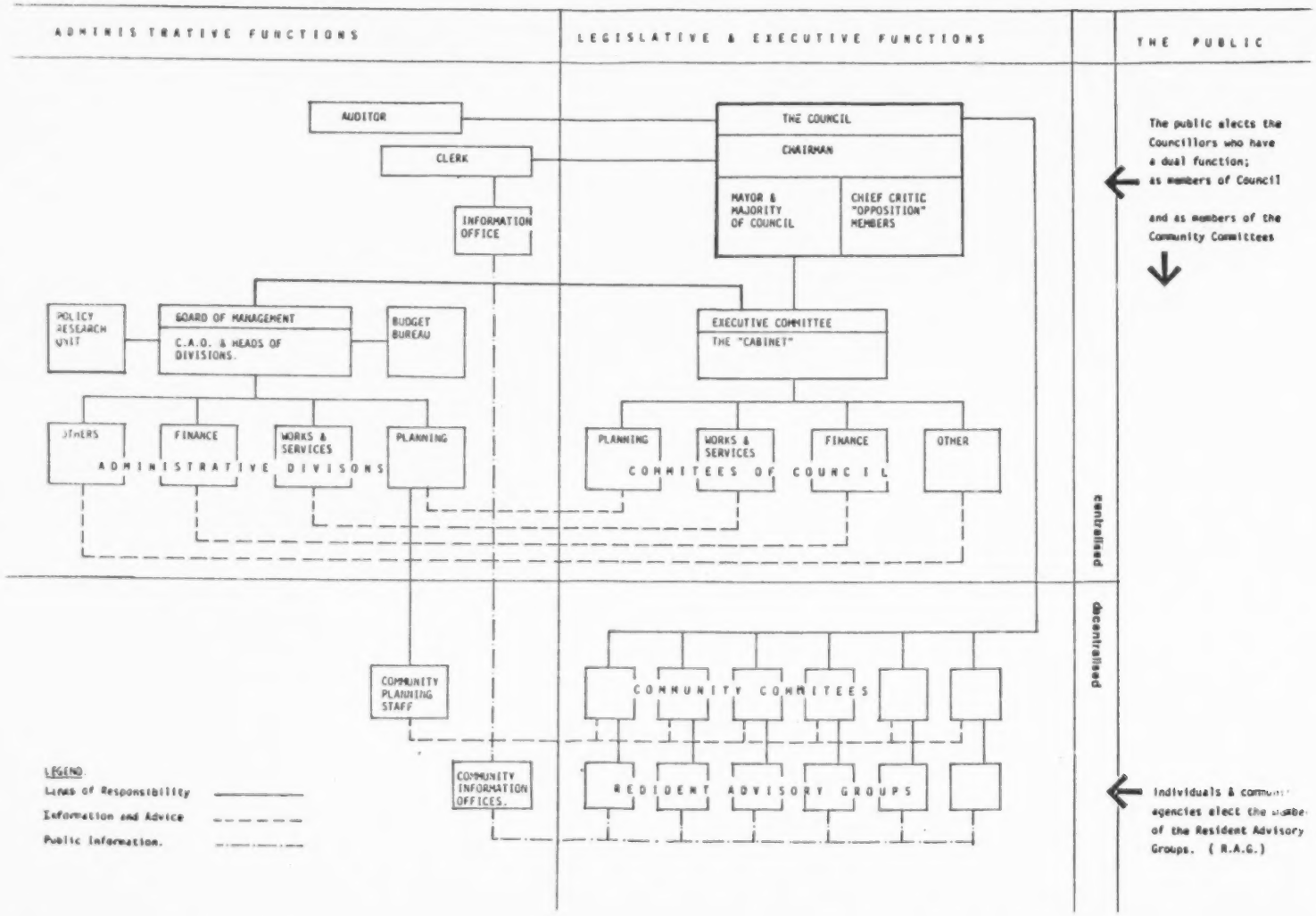
could be controlled by establishing a formula which would provide a ceiling on the City's capital debt.

Much of the Committee's discussion dealt with the administration of planning and zoning. With the best of intentions, the legislation, by requiring most planning issues to be routed through the Community Committees, the Committee for the Environment, the Executive Committee and Council, had created an extremely cumbersome and time-consuming process. It was recommended that all of the procedures for zoning and subdivision control be eliminated from the legislation and be dealt with by a procedure by-law of Council. Most of the planning issues should be dealt with by the Community Committees with the Executive Committee of Council taking over the role of the Manitoba Municipal Board as the forum for hearing appeals. The Council would continue to be responsible for the Development Plan, the overall policy statement. District and "Action Area" Plans would be the responsibility of the Community Committees.

The original Unicity legislation had borrowed from the United Kingdom planning practice and had instituted a hierarchy of plans. The Development Plan was the city-wide planning policy statement; Community Plans applied the city-wide policy to the Communities and expanded them to deal with planning issues particular to a Community. Where a program of development, redevelopment or improvement was contemplated for a particular part of a Community, details of the program would be incorporated in an Action Area Plan. One other feature borrowed from United Kingdom planning practice was the use of **development control**. Where appropriate, an area of development control could be designated by by-law. This would have the effect of removing the area from conventional zoning by-law control and permitting a development proposal to be judged on its merits, providing it complied with relevant policy plans. The advantage of this method was that it gave a greater degree of **flexibility** in dealing with development proposals. A conventional zoning by-law would continue to apply in areas where no change was contemplated, thus providing **certainty** in stable areas of the city.

FIGURE 3

The Government of the City of Winnipeg
Proposed by the Committee of Review - 1976



The Committee also dealt with the question of the basis for representation and made the recommendation that the size of wards should be based on the number of electors, not population as is the usual case.

Although the basic recommendation - the introduction of a specific "parliamentary" model for city government - was not accepted it is worthy of note as it provides an interesting alternative to the other reforms discussed in this study. Both it, and the original Unicity proposal clearly acknowledge both the service and political functions of municipal government. In addition, both models acknowledge the need to centralize the service function while decentralizing the political role.

Figure 3 has been prepared to illustrate the system of government recommended by the Review Committee. It shows that the legislative and executive functions would be separated from the administrative role, the two being connected through the link between the Executive Committee of Council (the "Cabinet") and the Board of Management (the senior staff group). A public information service was acknowledged as one of the important functions of the City Clerk's office and provided decentralized public information offices in each Community.

One other departure from normal practice should be noted; the heads of administrative divisions would not be responsible to a Committee of Council but to the Chief Administrative Officer (CAO). Their relationship to the Committees of Council would be to provide information and advice only. In this way the Committees of Council would be advised on the technical aspects of policy recommendations which the Chairmen of the Committees of Council would subsequently deal with as members of the Executive Committee to which the CAO would bring policy recommendations once they have been reviewed by the Board of Management. At the Board of Management the heads of Divisions would have the advantage of having discussed policy proposals with the members of Council constituting the particular Committee with which they had direct connection. In this way, the discussion of an issue in the Board of Management would be based on both technical and political responses to the issue. Similarly, when a proposal came to the Executive Committee the members

would have had the benefit of technical advice in addition to the political awareness that their elected position provided. This system also ensured that the members of the Executive Committee would be well informed on both the technical and political aspects of policy issues and would be adequately briefed to take part in the discussion in Council when the Executive Committee forwarded its policy recommendations for review and ratification. The connections between the Executive Committee and the Board of Management, and the members of these two groups, would also work in reverse and provide the channel through which Council became aware of the administrative activities of the government and could deal with such matters of administrative policy as were within the responsibility of Council; by-laws and resolutions of Council dealing with procedures are an example.

The Review Committee was critical of the way in which information was being provided - or not provided - to the public and recommended that this function should be examined to ensure that access to information was not being prevented by unnecessary use of confidential classification of documents or by staff who did not accept the significance of the public's right to access.

TABLE 1

Preferences of Those Who Expressed an Opinion on the Size of Council

Size Preferred	Councillors		Individuals		Organizations		Private Submissions		Total	
	no.	%	no.	%	no.	%	no.	%	no	%
46 - 0	16	51.6	6	46.1	8	61.5	0	-	30	49.2
40 - 45	1	3.2	0	-	0	-	0	-	1	1.6
36 - 39	3	9.7	0	-	2	15.4	1	25.0	6	9.8
30 - 35	1	3.2	0	-	0	-	1	25.0	3	4.9
26 - 29	7	22.6	1	7.7	1	7.7	0	-	5.5	9.0
20 - 25	-	-	1	7.7	0	-	2	50.0	6.5	10.7
16 - 19	3	9.7	1	7.7	1	7.7	0	-	5	8.2
12 - 15	0	-	3	23.1	1	7.7	0	-	4	6.6
Total	31	100	13	100	13	100	4	100	61	100

In any discussion of Unicity the question of the size of the Council is always raised. Although the problems identified by the Review Committee are not related only to this factor, but to lack of leadership and persistence of community, rather than city-wide concerns, the Committee was interested in the attitudes of those who made written and verbal presentations to them. Table 1 is taken from the Committee's Report, summarizes these attitudes.

In summary, the Review Committee found that Unicity had some impressive achievements; a single tax base, unified municipal services, a formal mechanism for citizen participation and general acceptance of the new form of government. However, failings and deficiencies were noted. These included lack of leadership, lack of accountability, confusion of roles and responsibilities among the politicians and the administrative officers, low staff morale, complicated and cumbersome approval processes - particularly in planning - and a narrow parochialism and neglect of large-scale, city-wide policies in Council. The Committee was convinced that the fundamental change in the system of civic government that they had recommended was necessary to overcome these problems. They recognized that their recommendations of a modified parliamentary form of city government ran contrary to tradition which held that a "businesslike" way of providing for the service function was paramount and that politics, in the partisan sense, had no place in municipal government.

> We recognize that such a step will make Winnipeg unique among Canadian cities. No other Canadian city has a parliamentary form of government as fully developed as that which we recommend. But then no other Canadian city has a system such as that which now exists in Winnipeg under the City of Winnipeg Act. In Manitoba uniqueness and innovation have long been characteristic of both City and Province in the search for the best answers to their political needs....
>
> We are hopeful that both the Province and the City - politicians and electors - will recognize the compelling logic of this present moment in the city's political evolution and will take the step which will establish the parliamentary form of government which will confirm and continue the tradition of creative political innovation which has marked the City's progress from its earliest beginnings.

Neither the City nor the Province accepted the Committee's "compelling logic" but rejected the parliamentary form. The number of councillors was reduced from 50 to 29 and the number of Communities was reduced from 12 to 6 by the

1977 amendment to the City of Winnipeg Act which made a number of other relatively minor changes to the system in place.

With the change in the incumbent of the Mayor's office, political leadership in Council improved but most of the failings and shortcomings noted by the Committee continued with only marginal improvement.

Local government reform in Canada is poorer without the experience which could have been gained had the experiment with parliamentary form in Winnipeg been implemented.

14. EVALUATION OF UNICITY WINNIPEG

The detailed study of the evolution of local government in Winnipeg which provides the basis for this report, ended at the time that changes were made following the Committee of Review. However, the author's interest in Winnipeg has continued, and it is hoped that there will be an opportunity in the future to return for sufficient time to prepare a detailed post-script to this report.

In attempting an evaluation of Unicity, a distinction must be made between the original proposal and what was actually implemented. The original proposal was a major innovation and a radical departure from what was familiar - a deliberate disregard for local political culture. It had the **potential** for satisfying all of the criteria for effective government, **providing** there would be a strong commitment to the principles underlying the reform and substantial political will to make it work. Sadly, political will was lacking and neither the elected councillors or the senior appointed officials were committed to the reform. As has already been mentioned, the decision to have the Mayor elected at large, rather than from within Council, dealt a fatal blow to the idea of a "parliamentary" system and the opportunity for the majority group in Council to develop and implement a policy platform under the watchful eyes of an **opposition**. Had the original system been implemented, it would have made it possible for elections to be fought on the basis of policy

and performance rather than as a disorganized contest between individual personalities.

It has been said that election at large gives the Mayor a very strong power base - and this is true. But in the case of Juba, for example, this power was exercised by an unprincipled loner and was used to support and enhance his personal reputation. The City as a whole benefitted from Juba's activities only on those rare occasions when the two kinds of gain - Juba's and the City's - coincided. With a different Mayor the results would have been different but, in the absence of election by Council, the essential check to the misuse, or misguided use of power was absent. The incumbent Mayor's close connection with the ICEC group on Council provides a partial check, but the Mayor can ignore the views of the ICEC group if he wishes. There is no way in which the group can then apply sanctions.

The recommendations of the Committee of Review would have reinstated and strengthened the original concept and would have ensured the leadership that was so obviously lacking in the system which was implemented. Even with the system which was put in place, the Community Committees and their supporting Resident Advisory Groups (RAGs) could have provided a much improved level of responsiveness, openness and representation. But commitment and will were lacking.

The Committee of Review also pointed out that, in spite of the detailed procedure which had been spelled out in the Act, there was still confusion and delay in the development approval process. This was attributed to the introduction of the Community Committees and their RAGs which came to be seen as additional hurdles to be overcome.

The partial centralization of services initiated by the Metro government was completed, and efficiency was improved thereby. Centralization of additional services and the provision of new ones proved difficult because of lack of leadership, clear policy direction and political will.

Apart from the criticisms discussed above, a more fundamental question that was raised in connection with the introduction of Metro government also applies in this context; was Unicity over-sold as the remedy to all of the ills of local government in Winnipeg? It seems that there is much still to be learned about introducing substantial change in the structure and responsibilities of local government, particularly when the change is a radical departure from what has been acceptable in the past.

To summarize, based on the criteria set out at the beginning of this report:

- efficiency has been improved
- responsiveness has improved insofar as the suburban residents are concerned, but at the expense of those living in the central area
- openness improved temporarily in the early days, but the improvement did not persist
- representation improved initially with the larger Council, but deteriorated as a result of the changes that occurred subsequently
- leadership, little effective leadership has been provided
- flexibility did not change as a result of the reforms
- commitment, like leadership, was lacking.

15. CONCLUSION

This has been an account of changes in local government in metropolitan Winnipeg over the last 35 years, based on direct participation in some of these changes and opportunities to discuss others with those who have been involved. Recent years at Waterloo have given an opportunity for reflection and have modified the biases of a metropolitan partisan. Opportunities to explore what has been happening in other Canadian metropolitan areas and in Europe have also helped in trying to come to grips with the nature of local government in the final decades of the 20th century.

Traditional wisdom holds that elected local government is the foundation of our form of democracy. It is also held that participation in the affairs of local government is both the right and the responsibility of the citizen. Both these tenets need to be re-examined.

There is a substantial body of opinion that holds that services, particularly hard services, can be provided by managers with the necessary technical expertise and, if the services can be financed on the basis of user-pay, there are no political decisions to be made. The current interest in privatization further reinforces this view. Even if the service role of local government can be substantially reduced, if not eliminated, there remains the political role - the resolution of local conflict over public decisions.

A large number of citizens appear to have no interest in local government, many do not vote and it is not uncommon for them not to know who their locally elected representative is; sometimes they may not be absolutely sure which municipality they live in! However, citizens do feel a strong need to participate and exert influence when a decision is to be made that affects them directly - rezoning for higher density on their street, or an increase in property taxes due to the adoption of market value assessment, for example.

The opportunity to participate is also used when a new need becomes apparent which cannot be satisfied by the private sector - day care for the children of some low-income families, for example.

Finally, there may be a need to articulate a position on an issue that is national or international in scope, but where the senior responsible governments appear distant and uncaring. The large number of municipalities that have declared themselves to be nuclear free zones is not evidence of a lack of understanding of constitutional responsibility but rather a manifestation of the need that individuals and groups feel to express themselves in a political forum on an issue that affects them directly.

In all of these instances we turn to local government because it is physically accessible and because we feel that it will understand and may share our particular "local" view of the situation. Finally, the knowledge that we can exert influence - even though we may never do so - is important to us. On this basis, it can be seen that our form of democracy cannot function without a local government component. Although service functions, including

schools, might be provided through a decentralized system of provincial government, without municipalities the local political function would be lost.

As local government serves an essential purpose in our system the next question is, "what form should it take?" Discussion of the internal structures of local government is beyond the scope of this paper except to stress that the administrative function needs a point of focus and this may be provided by a manager or by a small senior committee - a Board of Commissioners, for example. Similarly the policy making function also needs a point of focus, such as a strong mayor or some form of executive committee of Council.

The question most germane to this discussion is whether nor not a two-tier system is necessary. Although the answer to this depends on the local political culture to a large extent, there are very few circumstances where it is not, or could not be, useful. In Canada we have seen a number of variations of the two-tier theme, including Regional Districts in British Columbia, Regional Municipalities in Ontario, Metropolitan Communities in Quebec and the many variations of inter-municipal special purpose boards and commissions.

Looking specifically at the experience of Metro Winnipeg, this author is convinced that the two-tier system was working and with some adjustments such as those suggested by the Local Government Boundaries Commission in 1970, it could have continued to function effectively.

At this point it is useful to take a second look at the critical comments contained in the Proposals for Urban Reorganization in the Greater Winnipeg Area 1970 and the comments of more recent critics. The Proposals summarized the problem as follows: "planning and development are indivisible." While agreeing with this statement, it should be remembered that Metro had the power to develop the essential infrastructure necessary to provide the framework for private development. It also had exclusive authority for development control and, with clarification of its powers to carry out urban renewal and housing schemes, it would have had all of the powers necessary to carry out the public

role in private initiative that puts most of the urban development in place. The principal public role is to provide infrastructure and to control private development.

> Fragmented authority - with control of services divided, and the power to make decisions and carry them out fragmented, the community's human resources are dissipated and its economic capabilities to a **considerable extent squandered** (emphasis added).

The authors of the Proposals and other critics who have repeated this claim produced no evidence to support their stand. On the contrary, services were expanded and the capital cost of these was borne by the metropolitan area as a whole. There were only two participants involved in the decisions to extend services, the Metro Council and the Council of the area municipality concerned - hardly fragmentation. Furthermore, this division of responsibility was clearly understood by the participants and the concerned public. If the reference to "human resources" is to the staff of both Metro and the area municipalities, the minutes of the Planning Committee and Council indicate the volume of development decisions that were made, the majority of which were the result of successful co-ordination with the staff and Councils of the area municipalities concerned. The minority of development decisions that became political issues did necessitate reconsideration of decisions and some waste of time, but reconsideration of some decisions is inevitable in any system. If the reference to "human resources" has a wider connotation, the argument is difficult to follow. Similarly the statement that the economic capabilities- which are undefined - are squandered by real or imagined fragmentation, is unsubstantiated. It is also ironic to note that Unicity, the system that was put in place to remedy these ills, created a new kind of confusion and fragmentation. Development decisions were made through an even more complex process involving Community Committees, Committees of Council, an Executive Committee, a Board of Commissioners and Unicity staff advising at both Community and City levels. The record of performance of Unicity indicates that a familiar system, Metro, was replaced by a more complex and unfamiliar system, Unicity.

> There is a wide disparity in the quality and level of services between one municipality and another....

Yet another unsubstantiated statement. Where these differences existed they were the result of the decisions of the area municipalities, not Metro. To question the right of a locally elected Council to make decisions on the quality and level of services that its community could afford sounds rather strange coming from the advocates of a "decentralized political system." Surely the purpose of decentralization is to allow local areas to make the decisions about their own public services, a purpose that must also result in differences in levels of service?

The remainder of the criticisms contained in the Proposals are in the same vein and are equally unsubstantiated and are very much an echo of the rhetoric of the social and political literature of the day.

Both the documentation and verbal presentations to the Cumming Commission and the subsequent work of the Boundaries Commission support the principle of a two-tier system. The response to the Proposals did not produce supporting evidence of confusion and dissatisfaction, in fact the subsequent introduction of Unicity produced confusion in the minds of citizens which still persists, and created marked differences in the level of some services provided when the suburbs are compared with the central city.

It is interesting to note that a more recent evaluation of Metro[66] while acknowledging that "Metro's achievements were numerous" presents the view that its major achievement was to pave the way for unification. Two-tier government as a precursor to unification, though often argued, is by no means inevitable as the experience in Ontario and British Columbia bears out. The authors Brownstone and Plunkett lay considerable stress on the significance of Mayor Juba and claim that part of their mandate - as initiators of Unicity- was to eliminate Juba as a local political force. While hesitating to differ with such a well informed and involved opinion, the emphasis on one powerful individual, though understandable to anyone with experience of Winnipeg politics of the period, seems to distort evaluation of the system itself. Juba has now retired but even a superficial view of the current situation indicates that the strengths of the system have not become apparent and the

problems of political decision-making attributed to Juba's influence have not been eliminated.

Metro's achievements are also described favourably by another recent evaluation.

> Metro was able to plan and complete roads, bridges, parks, and other public works at an impressive rate. Given the circumscribed expectations of its creators, the experiment must be counted at least a qualified success.67

The same authors, when commenting on Unicity, question whether it overcame the deficiency of other structural reforms in Canada, including Metro Winnipeg, which had "failed utterly to strengthen its [local government's] embryonic political role and capability." While acknowledging that Unicity has been cited as the exception to this rule, Kiernan and Walker conclude that:

> despite the claims of its proponents, the institutional reform of Winnipeg's local government [Unicity] failed to produce discernable changes in policy or politicization.68

In spite of the fact that the Unicity reform directly addressed the question of politicization of local government, it was unsuccessful in this regard.

> The history of Canadian local government, including Winnipeg, bears ample testimony to public resistance to even the introduction of party politics. The ethos of anti-partisanship dies extremely hard - if it can be induced to die at all.69

One final speculation is offered concerning Unicity in its original form, or if the recommendations of the Taraska Committee had been adopted. If Unicity Council had been organized on a parliamentary basis with party discipline and an established program which the group in power was committed to carrying out, and assuming that the Councillors accepted this role, how would they have acted in their other role as Community Committee member? Would the Communities with a majority of members from the party in power have gained, while those with a majority of opposition members lost, insofar as local benefits were concerned? Would there have been a difference in priority, given the two roles, by members in positions of power (Committee Chairmen, for example) and those who were back-benchers?

The two Winnipeg reforms offer useful opportunities for comparison, not only in the structural sense, but also in the way in which the political role was addressed. Differences in the way in which the reforms were developed and implemented also provides interesting contrasts. Both reforms demonstrate strong resistance to the politicization of local government - Metro because it was not seen as an issue relevant to local government at that time, and Unicity because, although it was a major feature of the reform as originally proposed, it was traded-away in the negotiations that took place prior to passage of the legislation.

The study of Winnipeg in particular and other communities in Canada in general, leads me to certain conclusions about local government in the latter part of the twentieth century. Our system of democratic government requires an elected local council to provide a direct and responsible link with the citizens. This is essential if the citizens are to participate in public decisions.

As there are no universally accepted criteria for defining the geographic area of local government, the existing areas should form the building blocks of any reformed system. They are familiar and identification with them develops a sense of belonging.

A two-tier system has much to commend it in those areas where a group of local governments is to be maintained. A mechanism will be required to deal with inter-municipal and area-wide issues.

The service role of local government should be reassessed periodically. Some services may be improved by privatization, or by reallocation to an upper tier government or a province.

The political role needs to be stressed and legitimized. This does not necessarily mean the introduction of partisan politics. Contemporary methods of consensus-building based on easy access to information, and the resolution of conflict by mediation rather than the adversarial method should be explored.

The strength of local government will be reinforced by giving it final responsibility for as many decisions as possible. The power of provincial governments or their appointed administrative tribunals to supervise and supercede the decisions of local government should be severely restricted, if not eliminated.

These conclusions are offered for discussion in the hope that they, or other similar points of departure, can provide the basis for a well-reasoned and compelling basis for local government in the future.

NOTES

1. Smith et al., Report of the Committee on Taxation (Toronto: Government of Ontario, 1967) gives an alternative definition of the second function. It uses the term "access" but, in the view of this author, the term is too limited.

2. E.C. Banfield and J.Q. Wilson, City Politics (New York: Random House, 1963).

3. Personal research in the Provincial Archives of Manitoba in 1973.

4. Ibid.

5. Personal communication from Dr. W.J. Waines in 1974.

6. Assiniboia, Brooklands, Charleswood, Fort Garry, East Kildonan, St. Boniface, St. James, St. Vital, West Kildonan and Winnipeg. Dr. Waines had to write a tactful letter to the Mayor or Transcona explaining why that municipality had been omitted from the original invitation, assuring the Mayor that Transcona's participation was welcomed. This increased the number of initial participants to twelve.

7. Manitoba Provincial Municipal Committee, Report of the Subcommittee on Organization of Local Government Services in the Greater Winnipeg Area (Winnipeg: Queen's Printer, 1953).

8. Ibid.

9. Ibid.

10. Ibid.

11. Ibid.

12. Order-in-Council, Government of Manitoba, September 1955.

13. Ibid.

14. Greater Winnipeg Investigating Commission, Report and Recommendations (Winnipeg: Queen's Printer, 1959).

15. Ibid.

16. Ibid.

17. Ibid.

18. Ibid.

19. Ibid.

20. Ibid.

21. Ibid.

22. Ibid.

23. Ibid.

24. Ibid.

25. Ibid.

26. Ibid.

27. Ibid.

28. Ibid.

29. Ibid.

30. Ibid.

31. Ibid.

32. Ibid.

33. Ibid.

34. Ibid.

35. Ibid.

36. Ibid.

37. Ibid.

38. Ibid.

39. Ibid.

40. Now Senator Duff Roblin.

41. Based on a personal interview with Mr. Don Stinson, Q.C.

42. Manitoba, Manitoba Hansard (Winnipeg: Queen's Printer, 1960).

43. This and subsequent comments are based on a tape recorded interview with Mr. Johnson in 1973.

44. Now Senator Joseph Guay.

45. This and other quotations from the Winnipeg daily papers are taken from George West and George Rich, Metropolitan Winnipeg: A Summary of Press Cuttings (Winnipeg: 1973).

46. Subsequent personal interview with Lorne Cumming.

47. This and other quotations in this section are from Local Government Boundaries Commission, Provisional Plan for Local Government Units in the Greater Winnipeg Area (Winnipeg: Queen's Printer, September 1970).

48. Ibid.

49. Ibid.

50. Royal Commission on Local Government Organization and Finance, Report of the Manitoba Royal Commission on Local Government Organization and Finance (Winnipeg: Queen's Printer, April 1964).

51. Ibid.

52. Interview with the late James McInnes, C.A., a member of the Michener Commission and former Director of Finance for Metro Winnipeg.

53. West and Rich, Metropolitan Winnipeg: A Summary of Press Cuttings.

54. Conversation with Saul Cherniack.

55. Manitoba, Government of Manitoba, Proposals for Urban Reorganization in the Greater Winnipeg Area (Winnipeg: Queen's Printer, 1970).

56. Ibid.

57. For a detailed and scholarly discussion of the early days of Unicity, see P.H. Wichern, "Unicity After Two Years" (Paper prepared for the Canadian Political Science Association, June 1974).

58. Winnipeg Free Press, 26 January 1971.

59. Winnipeg, The City of Winnipeg Act, Section 23.

60. Meyer Brownstone was born and received his early education in Winnipeg. His professional and academic experience had, however, been obtained elsewhere.

61. This and other quotations in this section are taken from Committee of Review, City of Winnipeg Act, The Report and Recommendation of the Committee of Review - City of Winnipeg Act (Winnipeg: Queen's Printer, 1976).

62. Ibid.

63. Ibid.

64. Ibid.

65. Ibid.

66. M. Brownstone and T. Plunkett, Metropolitan Winnipeg: Politics and Reform of Local Government (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1983), 32-33, 177-79.

67. M. Kiernan and D. Walker, "Winnipeg," in City Politics in Canada, ed. W. Magnusson and A. Sancton (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1983), 227.

68. Ibid., 245.

69. Ibid.

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Dr. Alan F.J. Artibise, Director
Institute of Urban Studies
University of Winnipeg
515 Portage Avenue
Winnipeg, Manitoba R3B 2E9
Canada

Telephone: (204) 786-9409